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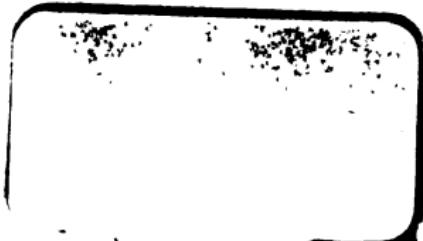


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FOR ENGLISH LITERATURE





LETTERS
OF
THOMAS GRAY

Selected
With a Biographical Notice
By
Henry Milnor Rideout



Boston
Small, Maynard & Company
1899

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PREFACE.

The text of these selections is that of the letters in Mr. Edmund Gosse's four-volume edition of Gray's Works. The only parts omitted in any one letter here are some few fragments from a torn letter (*XXXI.*, p. 114), and three postscripts that contained merely (*XIII.*) a catalogue of books, (*XXXVII.*) a botanical calendar, and (*L.*) a message added by Dr. Wharton. A few of Mr. Gosse's dates have been changed, chiefly by the help of Mr. D. C. Tovey's *Gray and His Friends*. For many facts and suggestions the editor is indebted to Mr. Tovey's book, to Mr. Gosse (in both the *Works* and *Life of Gray*), and to Mr. Leslie Stephen's *Gray in the Dictionary of National Biography*. Mr. C. T. Cope-land has kindly given much valuable advice. Mr. Nathaniel Allison has been so good as to read the proofs.

A convenient bibliography may be found in Mr. W. L. Phelps's *Selections from Gray's poetry and prose*.

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INTRODUCTION

IN Gray's early life one reads the short and simple annals, not indeed of the poor, but of the lower middle class. He was born in Cornhill, on the day after Christmas, 1716. A frail child,—the only one who lived to be reared of the twelve children born to Philip and Dorothy Antrobus Gray,—he could not long endure the wretchedness of life at home. The father, a man whose extravagant temper often grew violent to the point of madness, treated the mother most cruelly. Not only did he withhold to himself his inheritance of £10,000, and force her to keep a little shop with her sister in town; but, as the poor woman was at last driven to complain, he “used her in the most inhuman manner, by beating, kicking, punching, and with the most vile and abusive language, that she [was] in the utmost fear and danger of her life.” So the boy's uncle, Robert Antrobus, an Etonian and a fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, soon took him to live at Burnham.

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Here Gray remained till he was eleven or twelve years old ; and thence, with money sent from his mother's shop, he went to join the idle progeny at Eton. Among all those hearty young English boys he walked demurely. Not that his pale face, with its pointed nose and chin, broad forehead, and great eyes, lacked pertness and spirit ; but he was by nature quiet, exercised at Latin verse instead of cricket, and fell in with the more weakly lads of the school. Richard West, a delicate boy, whose father had been Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and Horace Walpole, the son of a prime minister, grew fast friends with Gray ; and the three, with a solemn little creature called Thomas Ashton, were known as the Quadruple Alliance.

It was after this alliance had broken up in 1734, after West had gone to Oxford, Gray and Ashton to Cambridge, and Walpole, with a year in London to his credit, had entered the latter university, that Gray began to write his letters. And here it will be well to say that, whether or not Gray was “a poet fallen on an

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age of prose," he was beyond doubt a great letter-writer fallen on the great age of letter-writing. Before the century was out, the post had carried through England, or through France, or across the narrow seas, the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; of Walpole's "old blind woman," the most clever and most selfish Madame du Deffand; of "that interminable entertaining Voltaire;" of the madcap Parson Sterne; of the unhappy Dean Swift; and of the three greatest letter-writers in the English list, Cowper, Walpole, and Gray. The very spirit of the eighteenth century encouraged Gray to practise the cheerful dexterities of the letter. Cheerful, certainly, his first messages to West were not. He was in the depths of youthful melancholy, felt life to be but a span, and was wearied unspeakably by the budge doctors of Cambridge. He asked for classics, and was given mathematics. With that generation of rat-baiters, the students, he had a very imperfect sympathy; and among all the Cantabrigians, he and Walpole were the only persons who drank tea instead of beer for breakfast.

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The officers of instruction were “doleful creatures,” “wild asses,” and “owls,” one and all. It has always been a privilege of undergraduates to bewail their surroundings. And while West, the poor gentle Favonius, was content to call Oxford “a land flowing with syllogisms and ale,” Gray so used or abused the privilege that all his early letters are models of quaint lamentation.

But this first attitude, *Il Penseroso* in a fit of the spleen, was soon to be changed. September, 1738, saw Gray’s departure from Peterhouse in an upheaval of “dust, old boxes, bedsteads, and tutors ;” and March of the next year found him setting out from his father’s house in Cornhill, where he had spent the interval, for the grand tour with Walpole. From the moment that the two reached Calais, Gray’s melancholy disappeared. Horace, who bore all the expense, and who was now performing in a mixed gait between the thoughtless young Englishman and the connoisseur, was “in no hurry ;” and they spent two years and a half in France, Switzerland, and Italy — a long period in

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which, for perhaps the only time in his life, Gray was entirely well and light-hearted. His European letters show, at all events, a great gain : to the grace of his earlier ones they have added a happier vivacity, a real interest in life, and thoughts which were new not only to Gray, but to the century. Some twenty years before our travellers, Lady Mary crossed the Alps ; and she, the most brilliant Englishwoman of the age, found that “the prodigious prospect of mountains . . . would have been solemnly entertaining,” had not the mountain air been uncomfortable. Gray, having followed in the track of her ladyship, wrote to West : “Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noonday ; you have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed, as to compose the mind without frightening it.” To say this is, as has often been pointed out, nothing more or less than to anticipate Words-

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worth by about fifty years. It is, according to Lowell, Wordsworth's own idea, that no one else was to have a share in. Gray had made it his by 1739 ; and though it never greatly affected his poetry, from this time forth his letters were the nobler for it. Melancholy was waiting in England to mark Gray for her own again ; his new liveliness was sometimes to be slackened by monotony ; but his mind never lost the new scope, nor his prose the new vista, that this little scholar from Peterhouse had gained in travels abroad.

The travels were brought abruptly to an end in 1741, by the famous quarrel at Reggio, where Gray and Walpole parted in anger. Had one the time or the wish, this would be a rare chance for gossip. It is enough, however, to say that the pair had been together too long, that their difference in temper and station had already caused little clashes, and that — partly from common pride, partly, it may be, from some bungling attempt of Ashton's at mediation — they could no longer abide each other. In his letters Gray never even mentioned the

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trouble. But years afterward, when Gray was dead and Mason writing his life, Walpole took to himself all the blame of the quarrel, and said that, "intoxicated by indulgence, vanity, and the insolence of his situation as Prime Minister's son," he had felt Gray's friendly criticism to be a little too frank. At any rate, Gray flung out of Reggio, and after two months in Venice got back to London in September.

Next May he is writing about boyhood to West. "As for me, I am never a bit the older, nor the bigger, nor the wiser, than I was then : no, not for having been beyond sea." This bit, which is in a train of thought about the oddness of being grown up, and remembering my Lords Sandwich and Halifax as dirty boys at cricket, is worth remark for several reasons. It was written only a few days before the unhappy West, struggling with a disease like that of Keats and a secret like that of Hamlet, reached the end of his short life. In the meantime Gray's father had died of gout, as violently as he had lived. Gray had helped his mother to close the little shop, to collect the remnants of the

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family fortune, and to establish herself with Mary Antrobus and their widowed sister, Mrs. Rogers, at Stoke-Pogis. He was now in London, studying law ; and the passage hints that in the period of these events, before the deep sorrow of Favonius's death, the continental light heart was greatly dashed, and Gray's native pensiveness returned. Were other evidence needed of Gray's fall from gaiety, one might have it elsewhere in the letters of this year. " You see," he says, " that I converse with none but the dead ; they are my old friends, and almost make me long to be among them. My life is like Harry the Fourth's supper of Hens, ' Poulets à la broche, Poulets en Ragoût, Poulets en Hâchis, Poulets en Fricasées.' Reading here, Reading there ; nothing but books with different sauces." But Gray, though not grown much bigger, was the better for having been beyond sea. His melancholy had become white, a " Leucocholy," he admitted, " a good easy sort of a state ; " and as to his being neither older nor wiser, that was merely the index of a mind humming with the *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.*

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For this year, with all its return of soberness, was perhaps Gray's most productive. True, he wrote only the *Ode to Spring*, the *Eton Ode*, the *Hymn to Adversity*, and possibly the beginning of the *Elegy*; but to write these as he did, in the last seven months of the year, was with Gray to perform an astonishing feat. Having shone out thus brightly and briefly, he disappeared into an interlunar cave. Peterhouse soon received him — now Bachelor of Civil Law — as a resident, and he was settled in Cambridge for the rest of a quiet and dilatory life. Except for continual journeys to Stoke before his mother died there in 1753, various short periods of residence in London, a journey to Scotland in 1765, four years later a tour through the Lake country, in 1770 a voyage by boat down the Wye (before Wordsworth again, these last two excursions !), and except for a few visits to picturesque places, Gray lived at the university.

Not altogether at Peterhouse, however : one curious episode made him change his rooms. He had a profound horror of fire ; and in 1756, finding that a certain Ephraim Hadden, of Wap-

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ping, advertised rope ladders for sale, he determined to have a fire-escape on his window in Peterhouse. The prudent Doctor Wharton was debauched to enter the project, and sent a ladder, which was at once adjusted. The apparatus was soon noticed, however, by the rough Georgian undergraduates ; and one night they raised an alarm of fire on the poet's staircase. The ladder was flung out ; a little figure in a night-gown swiftly descended ; and Gray plumped into a tub of water, where he might well have met the fate of Walpole's cat among the gold-fishes. Furious over this adventure, he very shortly marched over from Peterhouse to Pembroke, with his harpsichord, pots of mignonette, Japanese vases, and all. At Pembroke Hall he was not disturbed. Not disturbed enough, perhaps ; at least it would have been better for him had he been thrown, not into more tubs of water, but into more such states of mind as that produced by John Parry, the blind harper, whose music stirred him up to finish *The Bard*. Planning work that he never did, and doing work that he never finished, he felt himself appointed “ grand

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picker of straws, and push-pin player in ordinary to her Supinity — the power of *Laziness.*” His letters, written not so much in protest as for solace against this dull life, went to and fro more briskly than ever. Most of the best letters found their way to the “dear doctor,” Thomas Wharton, a sober, worthy physician, who certainly lent Gray money enough to deserve them. Many were written to Walpole, who after the “éclaircissement” and reconciliation in 1744 was once more an admiring friend, though never again “my Horace.” Then there was James Brown, master of Pembroke, “le petit bon homme.” There was William Mason, a good-natured and humdrum young worshipper, inordinately vain, who raged when the office of Poet Laureate was not offered to him after Gray’s refusal of it in 1757. Occasionally Gray wrote to Richard Stonehewer, through whose friendly intriguing he found himself, in 1768, thrust into the professorship of Modern History and Letters. These men, and later young Nicholls and Bonstetten, were the correspondents of the lonely poet. For lonely he was, and a lone man he

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remained, in spite of the friendliness of a certain Miss Speed, and Lady Cobham's apparent efforts toward match-making. Gray was too timid, perhaps, even to be "married passively," as he prophesied that Wharton would be. And when all the world thought Miss Speed ready to make Mr. Gray the happiest of men, his only advance took the form of a single bit of verse, not too amatory.

But though the letters are dark on this subject, and do not tell why amatory verse was not more plentiful, they do give excellent reasons both for the scarcity of Gray's true poetry, and for a hundred circumstances of that retired and unworldly life. He himself, while mournfully confessing that his total works were no greater in bulk than "the works of a flea or a pismire," thus accounts for his being "but a shrimp of an author." "I will be candid, . . . and avow to you that till fourscore-and-ten, whenever the humour takes me, I will write, because I like it; and because I like myself better when I do so. If I do not write much, it is because I cannot." The three Odes already mentioned,

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the *Elegy*, the *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat*, *The Progress of Poesy*, *The Bard*, *The Fatal Sisters*, *The Descent of Odin*, and a very few lesser pieces, — those were all. Always delicate, and in later years almost constantly ill, he lacked the physical energy to write more. Yet nowhere is there a hint that he felt otherwise than at liberty to “speak out,” or that he thought the age unfriendly. On the contrary, he seems instinctively to have believed that a richer and wider kingdom of poetry was near at hand, and that for romance

“the scale of night has turned the balance,
And weighs up morning.”

Though his odes, “vocal to the intelligent,” were vocal to fewer than he wished, Gray had too keen a sense of humour and proportion, too much shrewd playfulness, to think that the bewilderment of racing peers and young Lord Nunehams was a final check to poetry.

For playfulness, that quality in Gray which Cowper could not define, and Lowell could, wimples and dances through all the letters. The

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range is wide — humble little episodes, politics, the war, the weather, friendly advice, bits of criticism that deal with Aristotle, Froissart, Fielding, Montesquieu, Sterne, Voltaire ; but in all the diversity, playfulness shines like silver. Sometimes it is open, obvious, as when he pokes fun at affairs in Cambridge, — that “owl’s nest” of “old Fobus,” the “fizzling Duke” of Newcastle, — with the “squeezy and formal women” who lived there. Yet more often, and indeed generally, it is harder to come at with examples and definitions. Here might we have it, and here, and here ; but somehow it slips away. Like that immortal three-year-old filly, Gray’s humour

“ludit exultim metuitque tangi.”

And yet this playfulness is, after all, most characteristic when it serves as a veil to thoughts that lie deep enough for tears. Long after the death of his mother, whom he loved as tenderly as her life of silent suffering, devotion, and self-sacrifice deserved, he wrote to young Norton Nicholls : “I had discovered a thing very little

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known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but yesterday; and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart." This was the true Gray, smiling gently as the page blurred before his eyes.

It is not hard, then, to reconcile such playfulness with the tradition of Gray's melancholy; far less hard, when one considers that melancholy is by no means the tone of the letters. Just as the impression of his offishness and effeminacy is handed down by those enemies with whom he knew how to avoid talking, so the impression of his melancholy is given by those friends to whom he had most to say. Bonstetten, the volatile young Swiss, who in 1770 enjoyed the intimacy of midnight talks with Gray, found that the poet's lively

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and imaginative mind was offset by a “*misère de cœur*” which would not explain itself, but which Bonstetten thought the mournfulness of one who had never loved. There is a story, too, that once when Gray met Hogarth at Strawberry Hill he fell into such a fit of dejection and silence that the dinner was a failure. It was daily life and conversation that this temperamental sadness affected ; his pen he seldom dipped in the scholar’s melancholy. He never suffered from any Everlasting No ; but if he had, he would have spared his friends the groans of it, as he spared them the gentler *lacrymæ rerum*. Even the Leucoholy did not often get into the post-bag. And after the death of Gray’s mother, too real a grief walked up and down with him ; henceforth whimsical complaints ceased, and low spirits were not mentioned on paper except in context with ill-health.

After his mother’s death, moreover, the letters give more glimpses of nature even than before. Gray could not say, indeed, — as Mrs. Charlotte Smith said, to Cowper’s great delight,

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— that he would “endeavour to take an interest in green leaves again.” He had taken that always. But in his later and solitary years he turned more lovingly to green leaves, green fields, rivers, and hills of privilege. The postscripts to Wharton, for example, are little almanacs that breathe of flowers and stir with outdoor life — the daffodil and hyacinth flowering, apricots blowing, quince and sweet-briar putting out, the spider spinning, the song of the thrush and the sky-lark, and young rooks cawing in their nest. In his love for all these things Gray was ahead of his fellows. Sometimes he suspected as much; for once, writing to Norton Nicholls about Kent, he ended thus : “In the east, the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This last sentence is so fine, I am quite ashamed ; but no matter ! you must translate it into prose.” Into prose, likewise, Nicholls and his contemporaries must have turned a vast deal of the romance to which these letters first gave utterance. The rugged

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and the buoyant, both in Ossian and in scenery, strangely fascinated Gray. At Durham he discovered “prospects that change every ten steps, and open out something new . . . all rude and romantic ; in short, the sweetest spot to break your neck or drown yourself in that ever was beheld.” Is not this the same thought which Stevenson, some hundred and thirty years after, put into words only a little different ? — “ Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder ; certain old houses demand to be haunted ; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck.” What one man said at the dawn of the romantic movement, the other repeated at a sunset which threatens to be Arctic. With all their variance, both felt the poetry of circumstance, the fitness in events and places. And as all true romance does, Gray’s lent zest and color to the life he wrote about. His account of the coronation of George III. has all the glitter, pageantry, and comic touches of Walpole’s, without the malice and the worldliness. Best of all, whether his mind paused under the open sky or in the buzzing theatre of mankind, — indeed, whether his

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theme was romance or the commonplace, — he wrote always in the love he bore his friends, and in the desire to see them well pleased.

And so he who all his life was loyal to those friends found them loyal at the close. Heaven did a recompense as largely send. Through his last illness, James Brown, the master of Pembroke, hardly left Gray's bedside ; and when it proved that Dr. Glynn had donned his scarlet coat and clattered his pattens along on a useless errand, and that Gray, enduring with a silence learned from his mother, had never spoken out to tell how near the end was, Brown received the final messages and directions. To Gray's other friends the news of his death on the night of July 30, 1771, came most heavily. Nicholls wrote at once to his mother : “ If all the world had despised and hated me, I should have thought myself perfectly recompensed in his friendship. Now remains only one loss more : if I lose *you*, I am left alone in the world. At present I feel I have lost half myself. Let me hear that you are well.” He was right in holding the loss so dear. As a poet Gray had

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given himself to the world all too rarely ; as a man he had given himself to these simple men, his friends, and given the abundance of a rich store. Nor was the richness confined in the narrow circle of intimacy. Meanwhile he had achieved a style so fine, so full of resource, that his letters, with those of Madame de Sévigné, “*la grande épistolière du grand siècle*,” became the models for a still more famous letter-writer. There were a few more famous, it may be ; but none ever caught his serene temper, his racy and quaint expression, and above all his quiet rightness of mind.

LETTERS

Letters of Thomas Gray

I

To RICHARD WEST:

Cambridge, [1735]

When you have seen one of my days,

you have seen a whole year of my life;
they go round and round like the blind
horse in the mill, only he has the satis-
faction of fancying he makes a progress ✓
and gets some ground; my eyes are open
enough to see the same dull prospect, and
to know that having made four-and-twenty
steps more, I shall be just where I was,
I may, better than most people, say my
life is but a span, were I not afraid lest
you should not believe that a person so
short-lived could write even so long a
letter as this; in short, I believe I must
not send you the history of my own time,
till I can send you that also of the refor-
mation. However, as the most undeserving

LETTERS OF GRAY

people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

II

To RICHARD WEST:

London, August 22, 1737.

After a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's despair, at Cambridge, I am come to town, and to better hopes of seeing you. If what you sent me last be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours?

LETTERS OF GRAY

For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed ; though, if I were self-interested, I ought to wish for the continuance of anything that could be the occasion of so much pleasure to me. Low spirits are my true and faithful companions ; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do ; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh with me ; but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they must undergo the fate of all humble companions, and be discarded. Would I could turn them to the same use that you have done, and make an Apollo of them. If they could write such verses with me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor all that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's widow, should persuade me to part with them.

LETTERS OF GRAY

But, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account, obliges me to have done in reminding you that I am yours,
etc.

III

To HORACE WALPOLE:

September, 1737.

I was hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you; suffice it that I arrived safe at my uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to

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regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous. Both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds,

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And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
In murmur'ring sounds, the dark decrees of fate ;
While visions, as poetic eyes avow,
Cling to each leaf, and swarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of these squats ME I
> (il penseroso), and there grow to the trunk
for a whole morning. The timorous hare
and sportive squirrel gambol around me
like Adam in Paradise, before he had an
Eve; but I think he did not use to read
Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this
situation I often converse with my Hor-
ace, aloud, too, that is, talk to you, but I
do not remember that I ever heard you
answer me. I beg pardon for taking all
the conversation to myself, but it is en-
tirely your own fault. We have old Mr.
Southern at a gentleman's house a little
way off, who often comes to see us; he
is now seventy-seven years old, and has
almost wholly lost his memory; but is as
agreeable as an old man can be, at least I

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persuade myself so when I look at him,
and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I
shall be in town in about three weeks.
Adieu.

IV

To MRS. DOROTHY GRAY:

Rheims, June 21, N.S., 1739.

We have now been settled almost three weeks in this city, which is more considerable upon account of its size and antiquity, than from the number of its inhabitants, or any advantages of commerce. There is little in it worth a stranger's curiosity, besides the cathedral church, which is a vast Gothic building of a surprising beauty and lightness, all covered over with a profusion of little statues, and other ornaments. It is here the Kings of France are crowned by the Archbishop of Rheims, who is the first Peer, and the Primate of the kingdom. The holy ves-

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sel made use of on that occasion, which contains the oil, is kept in the church of St. Nicasius hard by, and is believed to have been brought by an angel from heaven at the coronation of Clovis, the first Christian king. The streets in general have but a melancholy aspect, the houses all old; the public walks run along the side of a great moat under the ramparts, where one hears a continual croaking of frogs; the country round about is one great plain covered with vines, which at this time of the year afford no very pleasing prospect, as being not above a foot high. What pleasures the place denies to the sight, it makes up to the palate; since you have nothing to drink but the best champaigne in the world, and all sorts of provisions equally good. As to other pleasures, there is not that freedom of conversation among the people of fashion here, that one sees in other parts of France;

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for though they are not very numerous in this place, and consequently must live a good deal together, yet they never come to any great familiarity with one another. As my Lord Conway had spent a good part of his time among them, his brother, and we with him, were soon introduced into all their assemblies. As soon as you enter, the lady of the house presents each of you a card, and offers you a party at quadrille ; you sit down, and play forty deals without intermission, excepting one quarter of an hour, when everybody rises to eat of what they call the gouter, which supplies the place of our tea, and is a service of wine, fruits, cream, sweetmeats, crawfish and cheese. People take what they like, and sit down again to play ; after that, they make little parties to go to the walks together, and then all the company retire to their separate habitations. Very seldom any suppers or dinners are

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given ; and this is the manner they live among one another ; not so much out of any aversion they have to pleasure, as out of a sort of formality they have contracted by not being much frequented by people who have lived at Paris. It is sure they do not hate gaiety any more than the rest of their country-people, and can enter into diversions, that are once proposed, with a good grace enough ; for instance, the other evening we happened to be got together in a company of eighteen people, men and women of the best fashion here, at a garden in the town to walk ; when one of the ladies bethought herself of asking, Why should not we sup here ? Immediately the cloth was laid by the side of a fountain under the trees, and a very elegant supper served up ; after which another said, Come, let us sing ; and directly began herself. From singing we insensibly fell to dancing, and singing in a round ; when

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somebody mentioned the violins, and immediately a company of them was ordered. Minuets were begun in the open air, and then came country-dances, which held till four o'clock next morning ; at which hour the gayest lady there proposed, that such as were weary should get into their coaches, and the rest of them should dance before them with the music in the van ; and in this manner we paraded through all the principal streets of the city, and waked everybody in it. Mr. Walpole had a mind to make a custom of the thing, and would have given a ball in the same manner next week ; but the women did not come into it ; so I believe it will drop, and they will return to their dull cards and usual formalities. We are not to stay above a month longer here, and shall then go to Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy, a very splendid and very gay town ; at least such is the present design.

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V

To RICHARD WEST:

Lyons, September 18, N.S., 1739.

Scevez vous bien, mon cher ami, que je vous hais, que je vous deteste ? voila des termes un peu forts ; and that will save me, upon a just computation, a page of paper and six drops of ink ; which, if I confined myself to reproaches of a more moderate nature, I should be obliged to employ in using you according to your desserts. What ! to let anybody reside three months at Rheims, and write but once to them ? Please to consult *Tully de Amicit.* page 5, line 25, and you will find it said in express terms, “ Ad amicum inter Remos relegatum mense uno quinquies scriptum esto ; ” nothing more plain or less liable to false interpretations. Now because, I suppose, it will give you pain to know we

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are in being, I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city situated upon the confluence of the Rhône and Saône (Arar, I should say) two people, who though of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel to the Mediterranean in company ; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy, incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluit judicari non possit ; the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her ; and with all her soft airs she likes him never the worse. She goes through the middle of the city in state, and he passes incog. without the walls, but waits for her a little below. The houses here are so high, and the streets so narrow, as would be sufficient to render Lyons the dismallest place in the world, but the number of people,

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and the face of commerce diffused about it, are, at least, as sufficient to make it the liveliest. Between these two sufficiencies, you will be in doubt what to think of it ; so we shall leave the city and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expression. It is surrounded with mountains, and those mountains all bedropped and bespeckled with houses, gardens, and plantations of the rich Bourgeois, who have from thence a prospect of the city in the vale below on the one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnais, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphiné, to bound the view. All yesterday morning we were busied in climbing up Mount Fourvière, where the ancient city stood perched at such a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever persuade their neighbours to pay them a visit. Here are the ruins of the Emperors' palaces, that

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resided here, that is to say, Augustus and Severus ; they consist in nothing but great masses of old wall, that have only their quality to make them respected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theatre: the Fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no esteem at all, and would have showed us their sacristy and chapel instead of them. The Ursuline Nuns have in their garden some Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, and heretics, they did not think proper to admit us. Hard by are eight arches of a most magnificent aqueduct, said to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here. There are many other parts of it dispersed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's seven great roads which met at Lyons ; in some places they lie twelve feet deep in the

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ground. In short, a thousand matters that you shall not know, till you give me a description of the Païs de Tombridge, and the effect its waters have upon you.

VI

To MRS. DOROTHY GRAY:

Turin, November 7, N.S., 1739.

I am this night arrived here, and have just set down to rest me after eight days' tiresome journey. For the three first we had the same road we before passed through to go to Geneva; the fourth we turned out of it, and for that day and the next travelled rather among than upon the Alps; the way commonly running through a deep valley by the side of the river Arve, which works itself a passage, with great difficulty and a mighty noise, among vast quantities of rocks, that have rolled down from the mountain-tops. The winter was so far

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advanced, as in great measure to spoil the beauty of the prospect ; however, there was still somewhat fine remaining amidst the savageness and horror of the place : the sixth we began to go up several of these mountains ; and as we were passing one, met with an odd accident enough : Mr. Walpole had a little fat black spaniel, that he was very fond of, which he sometimes used to set down, and let it run by the chaise side. We were at that time in a very rough road, not two yards broad at most ; on one side was a great wood of pines, and on the other a vast precipice ; it was noonday, and the sun shone bright, when all of a sudden, from the wood-side (which was as steep upwards as the other part was downwards), out rushed a great wolf, came close to the head of the horses, seized the dog by the throat, and rushed up the hill again with him in his mouth. This was done in less than a quarter of a

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minute; we all saw it, and yet the servants had not time to draw their pistols, or do anything to save the dog. If he had not been there, and the creature had thought fit to lay hold of one of the horses; chaise, and we, and all must inevitably have tumbled above fifty fathoms perpendicular down the precipice. The seventh we came to Lanebourg, the last town in Savoy; it lies at the foot of the famous Mount Cenis, which is so situated as to allow no room for any way but over the very top of it. Here the chaise was forced to be pulled to pieces, and the baggage and that to be carried by mules. We ourselves were wrapped up in our furs, and seated upon a sort of matted chair without legs, which is carried upon poles in the manner of a bier, and so begun to ascend by the help of eight men. It was six miles to the top, where a plain opens itself about as many more in breadth, covered

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perpetually with very deep snow, and in the midst of that a great lake of unfathomable depth, from whence a river takes its rise, and tumbles over monstrous rocks quite down the other side of the mountain. The descent is six miles more, but infinitely more steep than the going up; and here the men perfectly fly down with you, stepping from stone to stone with incredible swiftness in places where none but they could go three paces without falling. The immensity of the precipices, the roaring of the river and torrents that run into it, the huge craggs covered with ice and snow, and the clouds below you and about you, are objects it is impossible to conceive without seeing them ; and though we had heard many strange descriptions of the scene, none of them at all came up to it. We were but five hours in performing the whole, from which you may judge of the rapidity of the men's motion.

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We are now got into Piedmont, and stopped a little while at La Ferriere, a small village about three-quarters of the way down, but still among the clouds, where we began to hear a new language spoken round about us ; at last we got quite down, went through the Pas de Suse, a narrow road among the Alps, defended by two fortresses, and lay at Bussoleno. Next evening through a fine avenue of nine miles in length, as straight as a line, we arrived at this city, which, as you know, is the capital of the Principality, and the residence of the King of Sardinia. . . . We shall stay here, I believe, a fortnight, and proceed for Genoa, which is three or four days' journey to go post. I am, etc.

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VII

To RICHARD WEST:

Turin, November 16, N.S., 1739.

After eight days' journey through Greenland, we arrived at Turin. You approach it by a handsome avenue of nine miles long, and quite straight. The entrance is guarded by certain vigilant dragons, called Douâniers, who mumbled us for some time. The city is not large, as being a place of strength, and consequently confined within its fortifications ; it has many beauties and some faults ; among the first are streets all laid out by the line, regular uniform buildings, fine walks that surround the whole, and in general a good lively clean appearance ; but the houses are of brick plastered, which is apt to want repairing ; the windows of oiled paper, which is apt to be torn ; and every-

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thing very slight, which is apt to tumble down. There is an excellent Opera, but it is only in the Carnival ; Balls every night, but only in the Carnival ; Masquerades too, but only in the Carnival. This Carnival lasts only from Christmas to Lent ; one-half of the remaining part of the year is passed in remembering the last, the other in expecting the future Carnival. We cannot well subsist upon such slender diet, no more than upon an execrable Italian Comedy, and a Puppet-Show, called *Rappresentazione d'un' anima dannata*, which, I think, are all the present diversions of the place ; except the Marquise de Cavaillac's Conversazione, where one goes to see people play at Ombre and Taroc, a game with 72 cards all painted with suns, and moons, and devils and monks. Mr. Walpole has been at court ; the family are at present at a country palace, called La Venerie. The palace

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here in town is the very quintessence of gilding and looking-glass ; inlaid floors, carved pannels, and painting, wherever they could stick a brush. I own I have not, as yet, anywhere met with those grand and simple works of Art that are to amaze one, and whose sight one is to be the better for : but those of Nature have astonished me beyond expression. In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no restraining. Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noonday ; you have Death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed as to compose the mind without frightening it. I am well persuaded

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St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to choose such a situation for his retirement ; and perhaps should have been a disciple of his, had I been born in his time. You may believe Abelard and Héloïse were not forgot upon this occasion. If I do not mistake, I saw you too every now and then at a distance along the trees ; il me semble, que j'ai vu ce chien de visage là quelque part. You seemed to call to me from the other side of the precipice, but the noise of the river below was so great, that I really could not distinguish what you said ; it seemed to have a cadence like verse. In your next you will be so good to let me know what it was. The week we have since passed among the Alps, has not equalled the single day upon that mountain, because the winter was rather too far advanced, and the weather a little foggy. However, it did not want its beauties ; the savage rudeness of the view

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is inconceivable without seeing it : I reckoned in one day, thirteen cascades, the least of which was, I dare say, one hundred feet in height. I had Livy in the chaise with me, and beheld his “ *Nives cœlo propè immistæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi & inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu ; omnia, confragosa, præruptaque.* ” The creatures that inhabit them are, in all respects, below humanity ; and most of them, especially women, have the tumidum guttur, which they call goscia. Mont Cenis, I confess, carries the permission mountains have of being frightful rather too far ; and its horrors were accompanied with too much danger to give one time to reflect upon their beauties. There is a family of the Alpine monsters I have mentioned, upon its very top, that in the middle of winter calmly lay in their stock of provisions and

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firing, and so are buried in their hut for a month or two under the snow. When we were down it, and got a little way into Piedmont, we began to find “Apricos quosdam colles, rivosque prope sylvas, & jam humano.cultu digniora loca.” I read Silius Italicus too, for the first time ; and wished for you according to custom. We set out for Genoa in two days’ time.

VIII

To RICHARD WEST :

Florence, July 31, N.S., 1740.

Though far unworthy to enter into so learned and political a correspondence, I am employed pour barbouiller une page de sept pouces et demie en hauteur, et cinq en largeur ; and to inform you that we are at Florence, a city of Italy, and the capital of Tuscany ; the latitude I cannot justly tell, but it is governed by a Prince

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called Great Duke ; an excellent place to employ all one's animal sensations in, but utterly contrary to one's rational powers. I have struck a medal upon myself : the device is thus, O, and the motto *Nihilis-simo*, which I take in the most concise manner to contain a full account of my person, sentiments, occupations, and late glorious successes. If you choose to be annihilated too, you cannot do better than undertake this journey. Here you shall get up at twelve o'clock, breakfast till three, dine till five, sleep till six, drink cooling liquors till eight, go to the bridge till ten, sup till two, and so sleep till twelve again.

Labore fessi venimus ad larem nostrum
Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto :
Hoc est, quod unum est, pro laboribus tantis.
O quid solutis est beatius curis ?

We shall never come home again ; a universal war is just upon the point of break-

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ing out ; all out-lets will be shut up. I shall be secure in my nothingness, while you that will be so absurd as to exist, will envy me. You don't tell me what proficiency you make in the noble science of defence. Don't you start still at the sound of a gun ? Have you learned to say Ha ! ha ! and is your neck clothed with thunder ? Are your whiskers of a tolerable length ? And have you got drunk yet with brandy and gunpowder ? Adieu, noble Captain !

T. GRAY.

IX

To RICHARD WEST :

[*London, 1742.*]

I trust to the country, and that easy indolence you say you enjoy there, to restore you your health and spirits; and doubt not but, when the sun grows warm enough to tempt you from your fireside,

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you will (like all other things) be the better for his influence. He is my old friend, and an excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not been for him, life had often been to me intolerable. Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all authors in the world, can be tedious. An annalist, you know, is by no means master of his subject ; and I think one may venture to say, that if those Pannonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in another's they would have been insupportable. However, fear not, they will soon be over, and he will make ample amends. A man, who could join the *brilliant* of wit and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection and good sense of the best moderns, cannot choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit

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of liberty that every now and then breaks out, as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his *Agricola* that (concise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that General, where he had made him Coheir with his Wife and Daughter, “*Satis constabat lætatum eum, velut honore, judicioque: tam cæca & corrupta mens assiduis adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum principem.*”

As to the *Dunciad*, it is greatly admired ; the Genii of Operas and Schools, with their attendants, the pleas of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of dulness in the end, are as fine as anything he has written. The Metaphysicians' part is to me the worst ; and here and there a few ill-expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

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I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of *Agrippina*; much too long, but I could be glad you would retrench it. Aceronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's Bedlam Tragedy, which had twenty-five acts and some odd scenes.

X

To RICHARD WEST:

London, April, Thursday. [1742.]

You are the first who ever made a Muse of a Cough; to me it seems a much more easy task to versify in one's sleep (that indeed you were of old famous for), than for want of it. Not the wakeful nightingale (when she had a cough), ever sung so sweetly. I give you thanks for your warble, and wish you could sing yourself to rest. These wicked remains

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of your illness will sure give way to warm weather and gentle exercise ; which I hope you will not omit as the season advances. Whatever low spirits and indolence, the effect of them, may advise to the contrary, I pray you add five steps to your walk daily for my sake ; by the help of which, in a month's time, I propose to set you on horseback.

I talked of the *Dunciad* as concluding you had seen it ; if you have not, do you choose I should get and send it you ? I have myself, upon your recommendation, been reading *Joseph Andrews*. The incidents are ill laid and without invention ; but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases even in her lowest shapes. Parson Adams is perfectly well ; so is Mrs. Slipslop, and the story of Wilson ; and throughout he shows himself well read in Stage-Coaches, Country Squires, Inns, and Inns of Court.

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His reflections upon high people and low people, and misses and masters, are very good. However the exaltedness of some minds (or rather as I shrewdly suspect their insipidity and want of feeling or observation) may make them insensible to these light things (I mean such as characterise and paint nature), yet surely they are as weighty and much more useful than your grave discourses upon the mind, the passions, and what not. Now as the para-disaical pleasures of the Mahometans consist in playing upon the flute and lying with Houris, be mine to read eternal new romances of Marivaux and Crebillon.

You are very good in giving yourself the trouble to read and find fault with my long harangues. Your freedom (as you call it), has so little need of apologies, that I should scarce excuse your treating me any otherwise; which, whatever compliment it might be to my vanity, would be

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making a very ill one to my understanding. As to matter of stile, I have this to say : the language of the age is never the language of poetry ; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself ; to which almost every one, that has written, has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives : nay sometimes words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been great creators this way ; and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrow expressions from the former. Let me give you some instances from Dryden, whom everybody reckons a great master of our poetical tongue.—Full of *museful mopeings* — unlike the *trim* of love — a pleasant *beverage* — a *roundelay* of

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love — stood silent in his *mood* — with knots and *knares* deformed — his *ireful mood* — in proud *array* — his *boon* was granted — and *disarray* and shameful rout — *wayward* but wise — *furbished* for the field — the *foiled dodderd oaks* — *disherited* — *smouldering* flames — *retchless* of laws — *crones* old and ugly — the *beldam* at his side — the *grandam-hag* — *villanise* his Father's fame. — But they are infinite : and our language not being a settled thing (like the French) has an undoubted right to words of an hundred years old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is one of his principal beauties ; and he has no less advantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this, than in those other great excellences you mention. Every word in him is a picture. Pray put me the following lines into the tongue of our modern dramatics :

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“But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass :
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph :
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up — ”

And what follows. To me they appear untranslatable ; and if this be the case, our language is greatly degenerated. However, the affectation of imitating Shakespear may doubtless be carried too far ; and is no sort of excuse for sentiments ill-suited, or speeches ill-timed, which I believe is a little the case with me. I guess the most faulty expressions may be these — *silken son of dalliance* — *drowsier pretensions* — *wrinkled beldams* — *arched the hearer's brow* and *riveted his eyes in fearful extasie*. These are easily altered or omitted ; and indeed if the thoughts be

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wrong or superfluous, there is nothing easier than to leave out the whole. The first ten or twelve lines are, I believe, the best ; and as for the rest, I was betrayed into a good deal of it by Tacitus ; only what he has said in five words, I imagine I have said in fifty lines. Such is the misfortune of imitating the inimitable. Now, if you are of my opinion, una litura may do the business better than a dozen ; and you need not fear unravelling my web. I am a sort of spider ; and have little else to do but spin it over again, or creep to some other place and spin there. Alas ! for one who has nothing to do but amuse himself, I believe my amusements are as little amusing as most folks. But no matter ; it makes the hours pass ; and is better than *ἐν ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ ἀμονσίᾳ καταβιῶναι.* Adieu.

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XI

To JOHN CHUTE:

[*May 24, 1742.*]

MY DEAR SIR:

Three days ago as I was in the Coffee-House very deep in advertisements, a servant came in and waked me (as I thought) with the name of Mr. Chute; for half a minute I was not sure, but that it was you transported into England, by some strange chance, the Lord knows how, till he brought me to a coach that seem'd to have lost its way, by looking for a needle in a bottle of hay. In it was a lady who said she was not you, but only a near relation, and was so good to give me a letter, with which I return'd to my den, in order to prey upon it. I had wrote to you but a few days ago, and am glad of so good an excuse to do it again,

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the conduct of my Lord Orford, and to-morrow the Lords are summon'd about it. The wit of the times consists in Satirical Prints; I believe there have been some hundreds within this month. If you have any hopeful young designer of caricaturas, that has a political turn, he may pick up a pretty subsistence here: let him pass thro' Holland to improve his taste by the way. We are all very sorry for poor Queen Hungary: but we know of a second battle (which perhaps you may never hear of, but from me), as how Prince Lobby-cock came up in the nick of time, and cut 120,000 of them all to pieces; and how the King of Prussia narrowly escap'd aboard a ship, and so got down the Dannub to Wolf-in-Bottle, where Mr. Mallyboyce lay encamped; and how the Hannoverians, with Prince Hissy-Castle, at their head, fell upon the French Moun-seers, and took him away with all his

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treasure, among which is Pitt's diamond, and the great cistern — all this is firmly believed here, and a vast deal more : upon the strength of which we intend to declare war with France.

You are so obliging as to put me in mind of our last year's little expeditions ; alas ! Sir, they are past, and how many years will it be, at the rate you go on, before we can possibly renew them in this country : in all probability I shall be gone first on a long expedition to that undiscover'd country, from whose bourn no traveller returns : however (if I can), I will think of you, as I sail down the *River of Eternity*. I can't help thinking, that I should find no difference almost between this world, and t'other (for I converse with none but the dead here), only indeed I should receive nor write no more letters (for the Post is not very well regulated). If you see the King of Naples, pray talk

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with him on this subject, for I see he is upon settling one between his country and Constantinople, and I take this to be but a little more difficult.

My dab of Musick, and Prints, you are very good to think of sending with your own, to which I will add a farther trouble, by desireing you to send me some of the roots of a certain Flower, which I have seen at Florence. It is a huge white Hyacinth tinged with pink (Mr. M. knows what I mean, by the same token that they grow sometimes in the fat Gerina's *Boosom*), I mean if they bear a reasonable price, which you will judge of for me : but don't give yourself any pains about it, for if they are not easily had, and at an easy rate, I am not at all eager for them. Do you talk of *Strumming*? ohi me! who have not seen the face of a *Haspical*, since I came home ; no ! I have hang'd up my Harp on the Willows : however, I look at

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my musick now and then, that I may not forget it; for when you return, I intend to sing a song of thanksgiving, and praise the Lord with a cheerful noise of many-stringed instruments. Adieu! dear Sir, I am sincerely yours,

T. G.

O. S. London. Not forgetting my kiss-hands to Mr. Whithed.

XII

To THOMAS WHARTON:

Stoke, Thursday,

[post-mark 16th Nov.] [1744.]

I am not lost; here am I at Stoke, whither I came on Tuesday, and shall be again in town on Saturday, and at Cambridge on Wednesday or Thursday, you may be anxious to know what has past. I wrote a note the night I came, and immediately received a very civil

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answer. I went the following evening to see the *party* (as Mrs. Foible says), was something abashed at his confidence ; he came to meet me, kissed me on both sides with all the ease of one, who receives an acquaintance just come out of the country, squatted me into a Fauteuil, begun to talk of the town and this and that and t'other, and continued with little interruption for three hours, when I took my leave very indifferently pleased, but treated with wondrous good breeding. I supped with him next night (as he desired). Ashton was there, whose formalities tickled me inwardly, for he I found was to be angry about the letter I wrote him. However in going home together our hackney-coach jumbled us into a sort of reconciliation : he hammered out somewhat like an excuse ; and I received it very readily, because I cared not twopence whether it were true or not. So we grew the best

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acquaintance imaginable, and I sat with him on Sunday some hours alone, when he informed me of abundance of anecdotes much to my satisfaction, and in short opened (I really believe) his heart to me with that sincerity, that I found I had still less reason to have a good opinion of him, than (if possible) I ever had before. Next morning I breakfasted alone with Mr. W[alpole]; when we had all the eclaircissement I ever expected, and I left him far better satisfied, than I had been hitherto. When I return, I shall see him again. Such is the epitome of my four days. Mr. and Mrs. Simms and Mad^{le}e Nanny have done the honours of Leaden Hall to a miracle, and all join in a compliment to the Doctor. Your brother is well, the books are in good condition. Mad^{me}e Chenevix has frightened me with Ecritoires she asks three guineas for, that are not worth three half-pence :

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I have been in several shops and found nothing pretty. I fear it must be bespoke at last.

The day after I went you received a little letter directed to me, that seems wrote with a skewer, please to open it, and you'll find a receipt of Dan. Adcock for ten pound, w^{ch} I will beg you to receive of Gillham for me. If the letter miscarried, pray take care the money is paid to no one else. I expect to have a letter from you when I come to town, at your lodgings. Adieu, S^r. I am sincerely yours,

T. G.

XIII

To THOMAS WHARTON :

September 11, 1746, Stoke.

MY DEAR WHARTON :

What can one say to these things? if it had been in the power of lawyers to inter-

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pret into common sense statutes made by old monks, or monk-directed old women, we might have hoped for a more favourable answer to our queries ? as it is, I fear they may have done more hurt than good ; all I know is this, that I should rejoice poor T[uthill] had some place to rest the sole of his foot in ; and I flatter myself you will never omit anything in your power to support his little interest among a people, with whom you first raised it. I would gladly know the time of your audit, for I would be at Cambridge by that time, if I could. Mr. W[alpole] has taken a house in Windsor and I see him usually once a week ; but I think that will hardly detain me beyond the time I proposed to myself. He is at present gone to town to perform the disagreeable task of presenting and introducing about a young Florentine, the Marquis Rinuccini, who comes recommended to him. The D[uke] is here at

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his lodge with three whores, and three Aid-de-camps ; and the country swarms with people. He goes to races, and they make a ring about him, as at a bear-baiting ; and no wonder, for they do the same at Vauxhall and Ranelagh. At this last somebody was telling me they heard a man lamenting to some women of his acquaintance, and saying, how he had been up close to him, and he never repented of anything so much in his life, as that he did not touch him.

I am not altogether of your opinion, as to your Historical consolation in time of trouble. A calm melancholy it may produce, a stiller sort of despair, (and that only in some circumstances and on some constitutions) but I doubt no real content or comfort can ever arise in the human mind, but from Hope. Old Balmerino when he had read his paper to the people, pulled off his spectacles, spit upon his

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handkerchief, and wiped them clean for the use of his posterity; and that is the last page of his history. Have you seen Hogarth's print of Lord Lovat? it is admirable.

I cannot help thinking if I had been near you, I should have represented the horror of the thing in such a light, as that you should never have become a prey to Mr. Davie. I know that he'll get you up in a corner some day, and pick your bones and John will find nothing of you, but such a little heap, as a cat that is a good mouser leaves, the head and the tail piled together. My concern for you produced a vision, not such a one as you read in the *Spectators*, but actually a dream. I thought I was in t'other world and confined in a little apartment much like a cellar, enlightened by one rush candle that burned blue. On each side of me sate (for my sins) Mr. Davie, and my friend

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Mr. A[shton]; they bowed continually and smiled in my face, and while one filled me out very bitter tea, the other sweetened it with a vast deal of brown sugar; altogether it much resembled Syrup of Buckthorn. In the corner sat Tuthill very melancholy, in expectation of the tea-leaves.

I take it very ill you should have been in the twentieth year of the War, and yet say nothing of the Retreat from before Syracuse: is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life? and how does Xenophon, or Plutarch agree with you? for my part I read Aristotle; his Poetics, Politics, and Morals, though I don't well know which is which. In the first place he is the hardest Author by far I ever meddled with. Then he has a dry conciseness, that makes one imagine one is perusing a table of contents rather than a book; it tastes for all the world like chopped hay, or

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rather like chopped logick ; for he has a violent affection to that art, being in some sort his own invention ; so that he often loses himself in little trifling distinctions and verbal niceties, and what is worse leaves you to extricate yourself as you can. Thirdly, he has suffered vastly by the Transcribblers, as all Authors of great brevity necessarily must. Fourthly and lastly he has abundance of fine uncommon things, which make him well worth the pains he gives one. You see what you have to expect. This and a few Autumnal verses are my entertainments during the fall of the leaf. Notwithstanding which my time lies heavy on my hands, and I want to be at home again.

I have just received a visit from A[shton], he tells me we have certainly a peace with Spain very far advanced, which 'tis likely will produce a general one and that the king, when he has finished it, is

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determined to pass the rest of his days at Windsor, which to me is strange, however it comes from the Pelhamites. I send you here a page of books: enough I imagine to chuse out of, considering the state of your Coll. Finances. The best Editions of ancient authors should be the first things, I reckon, in a library: but if you think otherwise, I will send a page of a different kind. Pray write soon, and think me very faithfully yours,

T. G.

Say many good things to Mr. Brown from me.

XIV

To THOMAS WHARTON:

December 27, [1746].

MY DEAR WHARTON:

I have received your bill, and am in confusion to hear you have got in debt yourself in order to bring me out of it. I

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did not think to be obliged to you so much, nor on such terms ; but imagined you would be here, and might easily spare it. The money shall be repaid as soon as ever it is wanted, and sooner if the stocks rise a little higher.

My note you will find at the end of my letter, which you ought to have, *ἴάν τι κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον συμβαίνη*. The rest of my acknowledgments are upon record ; where they ought to be, with the rest of your kindnesses. The bill was paid me here. I suppose there is no likelihood of its being stopped in town.

It surprises me to hear you talk of so much business, and the uncertainty of your return ; and what not ? Sure you will find time to give me an account of your transactions, and your intentions. For your ears, don't let 'em think of marrying you ! for I know if you marry at all, you will be *married*. I mean, passively. And then

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(besides repenting of what you were not guilty of) you will never go abroad, never read anything more, but farriery-books, and justice-books ; and so either die of a consumption ; or live on and grow fat, which is worse. For me, and my retirement (for you are in the right to despise my dissipation de quinze jours), we are in the midst of Diog. Lærtius and his philosophers, as a proœmium to the series of their works, and those of all the poets and orators that lived before Philip of Macedon's death ; and we have made a great Chronological Table with our own hands, the wonder and amazement of Mr. Brown ; not so much for public events, though these too have a column assigned them, but rather, in a literary way, to compare the times of all great men, their writings and transactions. It begins at the 30th Olympiad, and is already brought down to the 113th ; that is, 332 years. Our only modern as-

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sistants are Marsham, Dodwell, and Bentley. Tuthill continues quiet in his Læta Pupertas, and by this time (were not his friends of it), would have forgot there was any such place as Pembroke in the world. All things there are just in *statu quo*; only the fellows, as I told you, are grown pretty rudish to their sovereign in general, for Francis is now departed. Poor dear Mr. Delaval indeed has had a little misfortune. Intelligence was brought, that he had with him a certain gentlewoman, properly called Nell Burnet (but whose Nom de Guerre was Captain Hargraves), in an officer's habit, whom he had carried all about to see chapels and libraries, and make visits in the face of day. The master raised his Posse comitatus in order to search his chambers, and after long feeling and snuffling about the bed, he declared they had certainly been there; which was very true, and the Captain was then locked up in a cupboard

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there, while his lover stood below in order to convey him out at window when all was over. However they took care not to discover her, though the master affirmed ; had he but caught her, he would soon have known, whether it was a man, or a woman. Upon this Mr. Delaval was desired to cut out his name, and did so. Next day Dr. L[ong] repented, and wrote a paper to testify he never knew any hurt of him ; which he brought to Dr. Whaley, who would have directly admitted him here, if Stuart had not absolutely refused. He was offered about at several colleges, but in vain. Then Dr. L. called two meetings to get him re-admitted there, but every one was inexorable, and so he has lost his pupil, who is gone, I suppose, to lie with his aunt Price. Trollope continues in Dev'reux Court. All our hopes are now in the Commencement.

Have you seen the works of two young !

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authors, a Mr. Warton and a Mr. Collins,
both writers of Odes? it is odd enough,
but each is the half of a considerable man,
and one the counterpart of the other.
The first has but little invention, very
poetical choice of expression, and a good
ear. The second, a fine fancy, modelled
upon the antique, a bad ear, great variety
of words, and images with no choice at
all. They both deserve to last some
years, but will not. Adieu! dear S^r. — I
am very sincerely yours,

T. G.

I was thirty year old yesterday. What
is it o'clock by you?

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XV

To THOMAS WHARTON :

*Cambridge, March [endorsed 1747],
Tuesday Night.*

MY DEAR WHARTON :

You ask me, what I would answer in case any one should ask me a certain question concerning you. In my conscience, I should say, yes; and the readier as I have had a revelation about it: 'twas in a dream, that told me you had taken a fancy to one of the four last letters in the alphabet. I think it can't be X, nor Z (for I know of no female Zeno, or Xenophon) it may be Y perhaps, but I have somehow a secret partiality for W, am I near it, or no? by this time I suppose, 'tis almost a done thing. There is no struggling with Destiny, so I acquiesce. Thus far only I should be glad to know

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with certainty whether it be likely [MS. torn] should continue in statu quo, till the Commencement (which I don't conceive) for [MS. torn] I should think it rather better for T[uthill] to give up his pretensions with a good grace, than to wait the pleasure of those dirty cubs, who will infallibly prefer the first that offers of their own people. But I submit this to your judgment, who (as you first made him a competitor) ought to determine at what time he may most decently withdraw. I have some uneasiness too on Brown's account, who has sacrificed all his interests with so much frankness, and is still so resolute to do everything for us without reserve, that I should see him with great concern under the paw of a fell visitor, and exposed to the insolence of that old rascal, the master. Tr[ollo]pe (if you remember) would engage himself no longer than the end of this year: 'tis true he has

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never said anything since, tending that way ; but he is not unlikely to remember it at a proper time. And as to Sm[art] : he must necessarily be abîm , in a very short time. His debts daily increase (you remember the state they were in, when you left us). Addison, I know, wrote smartly to him last week ; but it has had no effect that signifies, only I observe he takes hartshorn from morning to night lately : in the meantime he is amusing himself with a Comedy of his own writing, which he makes all the boys of his acquaintance act, and intends to borrow the Zodiack room, and have it performed publickly. Our friend Lawman, the mad attorney, is his copyist ; and truly the author himself is to the full as mad as he. His piece (he says) is inimitable, true sterling wit, and humour by God ; and he can't hear the Prologue without being ready to die with laughter. He acts five

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parts himself, and is only sorry, he can't do all the rest. He has also advertised a collection of Odes; and for his Vanity and Faculty of Lying, they are come to their full maturity. All this, you see, must come to a Jayl, or Bedlam, and that without any help, almost without pity. By the way, now I talk of a Jayl, please to let me know, when and where you would have me pay my own debts.

Chapman (I suppose you know) is warm in his mastership. Soon after his accession I was to see him: there was a very brilliant (Cambridge) assembly, Middleton, Rutherford, Heberden, Robinson, Coventry, and various others. He did the honours with a great deal of comical dignity, assisted by a Bedmaker in greasy leather breeches and a livery, and now he is gone to town to get preferment. But what you'll wonder at and what delights me, Coventry is his particular confident

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(tho' very disagreeably to himself) he can't open his door, but he finds the master there, who comes to set with him at all hours, and brings his works with him, for he is writing a great book on the Roman Constitution. Well, upon the strength of this I too am grown very great with Coventry, and to say the truth (bating his nose, and another circumstance, which is nothing to me) he is the best sort of man in this place. M[iddleto]n has published a small octavo on the Roman Senate, well enough, but nothing of very great consequence, and is now gone to be inducted into a Sine-cure (not £100 a year) that Sir J. Frederick gave him. What's worse, for the sake of this little nasty thing (I am told) he is determined to suppress a work, that would have made a great noise, or publish it all mangled and disfigured, and this when he has (I am assured) near £700 a year of his own already, and

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might live independent, and easy, and speak his mind in the face of the whole world Clerical and Laïcal. Such a passion
> have some men to lick the dust, and be trampled upon. The Fellow-Commoners (the bucks) are run mad, they set women upon their heads in the streets at noon-day, break open shops, game in the coffee-houses on Sundays, and in short act after my [MS. torn] heart.

My works are not so considerable as you imagine. I have read *Pausanias* and *Athenæus* all through, and *Æschylus* again. I am now in *Pindar* and *Lysias*: for I
> take Verse and Prose together, like bread and cheese. The Chronology is growing daily. The most noble of my performances latterly is a Pôme on the uncommon death of Mr. W[alpole]'s Cat, which being of a proper size and subject for a gentleman in your condition to peruse (besides that I flatter myself Miss —

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will give her judgment upon it too), I herewith send you. It won't detain you long.—Adieu, my dear Sir, I am ever yours,

T. G.

Trollope is in town still at his lodgings, and has been very ill. Brown wrote a month ago to Hayes and Christopher, but has had no answer, whether or no, they shall be here at the Commencement. Can you tell? Morley is going to be married to a grave and stayed Maiden of 30 years old with much pelf, and his own relation. ✓ Poor Soul!

XVI

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Cambridge, March 1, 1747.

As one ought to be particularly careful to avoid blunders in a compliment of condolence, it would be a sensible satisfaction to me (before I testify my sorrow, and the

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sincere part I take in your misfortune) to know for certain, who it is I lament. I knew Zara and Selima (Selima was it? or Fatima?), or rather I knew them both together; for I cannot justly say which was which. Then as to your handsome Cat, the name you distinguish her by, I am no less at a loss, as well knowing one's handsome cat is always the cat one likes best; or if one be alive and the other dead, it is usually the latter that is the handsomest. Besides, if the point were never so clear, I hope you do not think me so ill-bred or so imprudent as to forfeit all my interest in the survivor; oh, no! I would rather seem to mistake, and imagine to be sure it must be the tabby one that had met with this sad accident. Till this affair is a little better determined, you will excuse me if I do not begin to cry:

“Tempus inane peto, requiem, spatiuumque doloris.”

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Which interval is the more convenient, as it gives time to rejoice with you on your new honours. This is only a beginning ; I reckon next week we shall hear you are a free-Mason, or a Gormogon at least. Heigh ho ! I feel (as you to be sure have done long since) that I have very little to say, at least in prose. Somebody will be the better for it ; I do not mean you, but your Cat, feuë Mademoiselle Selime, whom I am about to immortalise for one week, or fortnight, as follows . . .

.
There's a poem for you, it is rather too long for an Epitaph.

XVII

To HORACE WALPOLE :

January, 1747.

It is doubtless an encouragement to continue writing to you, when you tell

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me you answer me with pleasure. I have another reason which would make me very copious, had I anything to say: it is, that I write to you with equal pleasure, though not with equal spirits, nor with like plenty of materials. Please to subtract, then, so much for spirit, and so much for matter; and you will find me, I hope, neither so slow, nor so short, as I might otherwise seem. Besides, I had a mind to send you the remainder of *Agrippina*, that was lost in a wilderness of papers.

Certainly you do her too much honour; she seemed to me to talk like an old boy, all in figures and mere poetry, instead of nature and the language of real passion. Do you remember “Approchez vous, Néron”? Who would not rather have thought of that half line, than all Mr. Rowe’s flowers of eloquence? However, you will find the remainder here at the end in an outrageous long speech: it was

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begun above four years ago (it is a misfortune you know my age, else I might have added), when I was very young. Poor West put a stop to that tragic torrent he saw breaking in upon him:— have a care, I warn you, not to set open the flood-gate again, lest it should drown you and me, and the bishop and all.

I am very sorry to hear you treat philosophy and her followers like a parcel of monks and hermits, and think myself obliged to vindicate a profession I honour, *bien que je n'en tienne pas boutique* (as Mad. Sevigné says). The first man that ever bore the name, if you remember, used to say, that life was like the Olympic games (the greatest public assembly of his age and country), where some came to shew the strength and agility of their body, as the champions; others, as the musicians, orators, poets, and historians, to shew their excellence in those arts; the

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traders to get money ; and the better sort, to enjoy the spectacle, and judge of all these. They did not then run away from society for fear of its temptations ; they passed their days in the midst of it ; conversation was their business : they cultivated the arts of persuasion, on purpose to shew men it was their interest, as well as their duty, not to be foolish, and false, and unjust ; and that too in many instances with success ; which is not very strange, for they shewed by their life, that their lessons were not impracticable ; and that pleasures were no temptations, but to such as wanted a clear preception of the pains annexed to them. But I have done preaching à la Grecque. Mr. Ratcliffe, made a shift to behave very rationally without their instructions, at a season which they took a great deal of pains to fortify themselves and others against : one would not desire to lose one's head with

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a better grace. I am particularly satisfied with the humanity of that last embrace to all the people about him. Sure it must be somewhat embarrassing to die before so much good company !

You need not fear but posterity will be ever glad to know the absurdity of their ancestors : the foolish will be glad to know they were as foolish as they, and the wise will be glad to find themselves wiser. You will please all the world then ; and if you recount miracles you will be believed so much the sooner. We are pleased when we wonder, and we believe because we are pleased. Folly and wisdom, and wonder and pleasure, join with me in desiring you would continue to entertain them : refuse us if you can. Adieu, dear Sir !

T. GRAY.

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XVIII

To DOROTHY GRAY:

Cambridge, November 7, 1749.

The unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me. I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and at last, when it was His pleasure, has taken her from us to Himself: and perhaps, if we reflect upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of His goodness both to her, and to those that loved her. She might have languished

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many years before our eyes in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless ; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it ; or perhaps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe ; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy ; and has now more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope, and beg, you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to Him, who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not ; if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

XIX

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Cambridge, February 11, 1751.

As you have brought me into a little sort of distress, you must assist me, I believe, to get out of it as well as I can. Yesterday I had the misfortune of receiving a letter from certain gentlemen (as their bookseller expresses it), who have taken the Magazine of Magazines into their hands. They tell me that an *ingenious* Poem, called *reflections in a Country Church-yard*, has been communicated to them, which they are printing forthwith; that they are informed that the *excellent* author of it is I by name, and that they beg not only his *indulgence*, but the *honour* of his correspondence, etc. As I am not at all disposed to be either so indulgent, or so correspondent, as they

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desire, I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me ; and therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time) from your copy, but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him, but on his best paper and character ; he must correct the press himself, and print it without any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them ; and the title must be, — Elegy, written in a Country Church-yard. If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better. If you behold the Magazine of Magazines in the light that I do, you will not refuse to give yourself this trouble on my account, which you have taken of your own accord before now. If Dodsley do not do this immediately, he may as well let it alone.

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XX

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Ash-Wednesday, Cambridge, 1751.

MY DEAR SIR :

You have indeed conducted with great decency my little *misfortune*: you have taken a paternal care of it, and expressed much more kindness than could have been expressed from so near a relation. But we are all frail; and I hope to do as much for you another time.

Nurse Dodsley has given it a pinch or two in the cradle, that (I doubt) it will bear the marks of as long as it lives. But no matter: we have ourselves suffered under her hands before now; and besides, it will only look the more careless and by *accident* as it were. I thank you for your advertisement, which saves my honour, and in a manner *bien flatteuse pour moi*,

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who should be put to it even to make myself a compliment in good English.

You will take me for a mere poet, and a fetcher and carrier of sing-song, if I tell you that I intend to send you the beginning of a drama, not mine, thank God, as you will believe, when you hear it is finished, but wrote by a person whom I have a very good opinion of. It is (unfortunately) in the manner of the ancient drama, with choruses, which I am to my shame the occasion of ; for, as great part of it was at first written in that form, I would not suffer him to change it to a play fit for the stage, and as he intended, because the lyric parts are the best of it, they must have been lost. The story is Saxon, and the language has a tang of Shakespeare, that suits an old-fashioned fable very well. In short I don't do it merely to amuse you, but for the sake of the author, who wants a judge, and so I

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would lend him *mine*: yet not without your leave, lest you should have us up to dirty our stockings at the bar of your house, for wasting the time and politics of the *nation*. — Adieu, Sir! I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

XXI

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Your pen was too rapid to mind the common form of a direction, and so, by omitting the words *near Windsor*, your letter has been diverting itself at another Stoke, near Ailesbury, and came not to my hands till to-day.

The true original chairs were all sold, when the Huntingdons broke; there are nothing now but Halsey chairs, not adapted to the squareness of gothic dowager's rump. And by the way I do not see how the uneasiness and uncomfortable-

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ness of a coronation-chair can be any objection with you: every chair that is easy is modern, and unknown to our ancestors. As I remember there were certain low chairs, that looked like ebony, at Esher, and were old and pretty. Why should not Mr. Bentley improve upon them? — I do not wonder at Dodsley. You have talked to him of six *Odes*, for so you are pleased to call everything I write, though it be but a receipt to make apple-dumplings. He has reason to gulp when he finds one of them only a long story. I don't know but I may send him very soon (by your hands) an ode to his own tooth, a high Pindaric upon stilts, which one must be a better scholar than he is to understand a line of, and the very best scholars will understand but a little matter here and there.

It wants but seventeen lines of having an end, I don't say of being finished. As

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it is so unfortunate to come too late for Mr. Bentley, it may appear in the 4th volume of the *Miscellanies*, provided you don't think it execrable, and suppress it. Pray when the fine book is to be printed, let me revise the press, for you know you can't; and there are a few trifles I could wish altered.

I know not what you mean by hours of love, and cherries, and pine-apples. I neither see nor hear anything here, and am of opinion that is the best way. My compliments to Mr. Bentley, if he be with you.—I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

I desire you would not show that Epigram I repeated to you, as mine. I have heard of it twice already as coming from you.

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XXII

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Stoke, January, 1753.

I am at present at Stoke, to which place I came at half an hour's warning upon the news I received of my mother's illness, and did not expect to have found her alive; but when I arrived she was much better, and continues so. I shall therefore be very glad to make you a visit at Strawberry-hill, whenever you give me notice of a convenient time. I am surprised at the print, which far surpasses my idea of London graving: the drawing itself was so finished, that I suppose it did not require all the art I had imagined to copy it tolerably. My aunts seeing me open your letter, took it to be a burying ticket, and asked whether anybody had left me a ring; and so they still conceive it to be, even with all their

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spectacles on. Heaven forbid they should suspect it to belong to any verses of mine. / they would burn me for a poet. On my own part I am satisfied, if this design of yours succeed so well as you intend it ; and yet I know it will be accompanied with something not at all agreeable to me. — While I write this, I receive your second letter. — Sure, you are not out of your wits ! This I know, if you suffer my head to be printed, you will infallibly put me out of mine. I conjure you immediately to put a stop to any such design. Who is at the expence of engraving it, I know not ; but if it be Dodsley, I will make up the loss to him. The thing as it was, I know, will make me ridiculous enough ; but to appear in proper person, at the head of my works, consisting of half a dozen ballads in thirty pages, would / be worse than the pillory. I do assure you, if I had received such a book, with

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such a frontispiece, without any warning, I believe it would have given me a palsy : therefore I rejoice to have received this notice, and shall not be easy till you tell me all thoughts of it are laid aside. I am extremely in earnest, and cannot bear even the idea.

I had written to Dodsley if I had not received yours, to tell him how little I liked the title which he meant to prefix ; but your letter has put all that out of my head. If you think it necessary to print these explanations for the use of people that have no eyes, I should be glad they were a little altered. I am to my shame in your debt for a long letter, but I cannot think of anything else, till you have set me at ease on this matter.

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XXIII

To THOMAS WHARTON:

Stoke, March 15 [1753].

MY DEAR WHARTON :

I judge by this time you are in town : the reason that I thought would have deprived me of the pleasure of seeing you is now at an end. My poor mother, after a long and painful struggle for life, expired on Sunday morning. When I have seen her buried, I shall come to London, and it will be a particular satisfaction to me to find you there. If you can procure me a tolerable lodging near you, be so good (if you can conveniently) to let me know the night you receive this ; if not, I shall go to my old landlord in Jermyn Street. I believe, I shall come on Tuesday, and stay a few days, for I must return hither to pay my aunt her arrears, which she will

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demand with great exactness.—Adieu,
dear Sir, I am ever yours, T. GRAY.

To me at Mrs. Rogers's of Stoke, near
Windsor, Bucks.

XXIV

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

Durham, July 24, Tuesday, 1753.

DEAR SIR :

We performed our journey, a very agreeable one, within the time appointed, and left out scarcely anything worth seeing in or near our way. The Doctor and Mrs. Wharton had expected us about two hours, when we arrived at Studley on Friday. We passed that night at Ripon, and the next at Richmond; and on Sunday evening got to Durham. I cannot now enter into the particulars of my travels, because I have not yet gathered up my

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quotations from the Classics to intersperse, like Mr. Addison; but I hope to be able soon to entertain you with a dish of very choice erudition. I have another reason, too, which is, that the post is just setting out. Suffice it to tell you, that I have one of the most beautiful vales here in England to walk in, with prospects that change every ten steps, and open something new wherever I turn me, all rude and romantic; in short, the sweetest spot to break your neck or drown yourself in that ever was beheld. I have done neither yet, but I have been twice at the races, once at the assembly, have had a visit from Dr. Chapman, and dined with the Bishop.

I am very shabby, for Stonhewer's box, with my coat in it, which went by sea, is not yet arrived. You are desired therefore to send Lee, the bedmaker at Peterhouse, to the master of the Lynn boats,

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to enquire what vessel it was sent by, and why it does not come. It was directed to Dr. Stonhewer, of Houghton, to be left with the rector of Sunderland. Another trouble I have to give you, which is to order Barnes to bring any letter Stonhewer or I may have to you, and direct them hither. The Doctor and Mrs. Wharton desire their particular compliments to you, and are sorry you could not be with us. Adieu. I am ever sincerely yours,

T. G.

P.S. — I have left my watch hanging (I believe) in my bed-room : will you be so good as to ask after it.

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XXV

To THOMAS WHARTON:

October 18 [Endorsed 1753], Stoke.

MY DEAR DOCTOR:

You will wonder not to have heard sooner of me. The reason has been the instability of my own situation. As soon as I arrived at Cambridge, I found a letter informing me my aunt Rogers had had a stroke of the palsy, so that I stayed only a single day, and set out for this place. I found her recovered surprisingly from the greatest danger. Her speech only is not yet quite restored; but it is easily intelligible to such as are used to her. Is not this something extraordinary at seventy-seven?

I met Mason at York, and passed that evening with him. . . . has absolutely no support at present but his Fel-

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lowship ; yet he looks more like a hero, than ever I knew him, like one that can stare poverty in the face without being frightened, and instead of growing little and humble before her, has fortified his spirit and elevated his brow to meet her like a man. In short if he can hold it, I shall admire him, for I always maintained, that nobody has occasion for pride but the poor, and that everywhere else it is a sign of folly. My journey was not so bad as usual in a stage-coach. There was a Lady Swinburne, a Roman Catholick, not young, that had been much abroad, seen a great deal, knew a great many people, very chatty and communicative, so that I passed my time very well; and on the third day left them at Stilton, and got to Cambridge that night. As I know, and have heard mighty little to entertain you with, I can only tell you my observations on the face of the country and the season in my way

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hither, that you may compare them with what you see at Durham. Till I came to York I thought the face of everything rather altered for the worse, certainly not better than that corner of the Bishoprick about Darlington. At Topcliff I saw a large vine full of black grapes, that seemed ripe. At Helperby met a flock of geese in *full song*. If their person had not betrayed them, one might have taken them for nightingales. At York walnuts ripe, twenty for a penny. From thence, especially south of Tadcaster, I thought the country extremely beautiful, broke into fine hills covered with noble woods (particularly towards the east), and everything as verdant almost, as at midsummer. This continued to Doncaster. The hazle and whitethorn were turning yellow in the hedges, the sycamore, lime, and ash (where it was young, or much exposed), were growing rusty, but far greener than in

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your county. The old ash, the oak, and other timber, shewed no signs of winter. Some few of the lands were in stubble, but for the most part they were ploughed up, or covered with turnips. I find Mr. Evelyn in his book of forest trees, published in Queen Anne's time, takes notice "That Shropshire, and several other counties, and rarely any beyond Stamford to Durham, have the vernacular (or French Elm), or the Mountain Elm (which is what you call the English Elm), growing for many miles together." I cannot say I saw any, but about Scrubey in Nottinghamshire, and they were young ones newly planted near a hedgerow. He also mentions the elm of a more scabrous leaf, harsh and very large, which becomes a huge tree; *mentioned in the Statue Books under the name of the Wych-Hayle.* For my part, I could find no sort but the last, at least of any size, or growing in a wild

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way, till I came into Northamptonshire. I thought the winter more advanced in Lincolnshire, and so on, till I had passed Huntingdon, than it was in the West Riding of Yorkshire. In Northamptonshire I first observed the appearances of a long drought, which continued quite hither. The turf is everywhere brown and burnt up, as in Italy; even the low meadows want their usual verdure. At Cambridge the finest grapes I ever saw there; the lime trees were only changing colour, but had dropped few of their leaves. In the smoke of London they had almost lost their old leaves, but made fresh shoots, as green as in April. And here before my window are two young sycamores, which have done the same, but still retain all their old leaves too without any change of colour. At Trompington the new rye was green in the fields, and three inches high. It is the same in this county. We

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are here upon a loam with a bed of gravel below, and rag-stone beneath that. The hay is usually all in by Old Midsummer, this year it was all cut by New Midsummer, but a great deal of it lost for want of rain, which likewise spoiled the tares and peas. In the beginning of August was rain for near three weeks, which saved the corn. Oats were in some places cut before the wheat, which was all got in by the 20th of August. Barley, beans, etc., by the 7th of September. I came hither the 6th of October, and they had then within a mile of the Thames (where the soil is better, than here) begun to sow wheat. For six weeks before my arrival it had been continued fine weather, and the air till sunset was like July. Never almost was such a year known for fruit. The nectarines and best peaches had been all gathered three weeks before. The grapes were then per-

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fectedly ripe, and still continue the best I ever eat in England. October 9th, it began to rain, and we have had showers every day since, with brisk winds in the S. and S.W.; to-day it is in the North, clear sunshine, but cold and a little wintry: and so ends my Georgick in prose. Excuse me, if I had nothing better to send you. It is partly from my own eyesight, and partly from the report of such as have no prejudices in favour of their county, because they hardly know, there is any other.

I write chiefly to draw on a letter from you, for I am impatient to know many things; but remember, this election-time letters are apt to be opened at the offices. Pray, make my sincere acknowledgements to my *kind Hostess*: I trust she was not the worse for her journey. I hope, you know, that I am ever yours, T. G.

At Mrs. Rogers's, of Stoke,
near Windsor, Bucks.

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P.S. — Everything resounds with the wood-lark, and robin ; and the voice of the sparrow is heard in our land. Remember me to all, that remember there is such a person.
Adieu !

XXVI

To RICHARD HURD :

Stoke, August 25, 1757.

DEAR SIR :

I do not know why you should thank me for what you had a right and title to ; but attribute it to the excess of your politeness, and the more so because almost no one else has made me the same compliment. As your acquaintance in the University (you say) do me the honour to admire, it would be ungenerous in me not to give them notice that they are doing a very unfashionable thing, for all people of condition are agreed not to admire, nor

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even to understand : one very great man, writing to an acquaintance of his and mine, says that he had read them seven or eight times, and that now, when he next sees him, he shall not have above thirty questions to ask. Another, a peer, believes that the last stanza of the Second Ode relates to King Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell. Even my friends tell me they do not succeed, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head ; in short, I have heard of nobody but a player and a doctor of divinity that profess their esteem for them. Oh yes ! a lady of quality, a friend of Mason's, who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was anything said about Shakspeare or Milton, till it was explained to her ; and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about.

From this mention of Mason's name

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you may think, perhaps, we are great correspondents ; no such thing ; I have not heard from him these two months. I will be sure to scold in my own name as well as in yours. I rejoice to hear you are so ripe for the press, and so voluminous,—not for my own sake only, whom you flatter with the hopes of seeing your labours both public and private,—but for yours too, for to be employed is to be happy. This principle of mine, and I am convinced of its truth, has, as usual, no influence on my practice. I am alone and *ennuyé* to the last degree, yet do nothing ; indeed I have one excuse ; my health, which you so kindly enquire after, is not extraordinary, ever since I came hither. It is no great malady, but several little ones, that seem brewing no good to me.

It will be a particular pleasure to me to hear whether Content dwells in Leicestershire, and how she entertains her-

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self there ; only do not be too happy, nor forget entirely the quiet ugliness of Cambridge. I am, dear sir,

Your friend and obliged humble servant.

T. GRAY.

If Mr. Brown falls in your way, be so good as to shew him the beginning of this letter, and it will save me the labour of writing the same thing twice. His first letter, I believe, was in the mail that was robbed, for it was delayed many days ; his second I have just received.

XXVII

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON :

December 19, 1757.

DEAR MASON :

Though I very well know the bland emollient saponaceous qualities both of sack and silver, yet if any great man

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would say to me, “ I make you rat-catcher to his Majesty, with a salary of £300 a year and two butts of the best Malaga ; and though it has been usual to catch a mouse or two, for form’s sake, in public once a year, yet to you, sir, we shall not stand upon these things,” I cannot say I should jump at it ; nay, if they would drop the very name of the office, and call me Sinecure to the King’s Majesty, I should still feel a little awkward, and think everybody I saw smelt a rat about me ; but I do not pretend to blame any one else that has not the same sensations ; for my part I would rather be serjeant trumpeter or pinmaker to the palace. Nevertheless I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather wish somebody may accept it that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had

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it. As to Settle, whom you mention, he belonged to my lord mayor not to the king. Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, though at last he turned out a drunken parson. Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest scribbler could have been from his verses. The office itself has always humbled the professor hitherto (even in an age when kings were somebody), if he were a poor writer by making him more conspicuous, and if he were a good one by setting him at war with the little fry of his own profession, for there are poets little enough to envy even a poet-laureat.

I am obliged to you for your news; pray send me some more, and better of the sort. I can tell you nothing in return; so your generosity will be the greater; — only Dick is going to give up his rooms, and live at Ashwell. Mr.

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Treasurer sets Sir M. Lamb at nought, and says he has sent him reasons half a sheet at a time ; and Mr. Brown attests his veracity as an eye-witness. I have had nine pages of criticism on the “ Bard ” sent me in an anonymous letter, directed to the Reverend Mr. G. at Strawberry Hill ; and if I have a mind to hear as much more on the other Ode, I am told where I may direct. He seems a good sensible man, and I dare say a clergyman. He is very frank, and indeed much ruder than he means to be. Adieu, dear Mason, and believe me that I am too.

XXVIII

To WILLIAM PALGRAVE :

[*Stoke,*] September 6, 1758.

I do not know how to make you amends, having neither rock, ruin, or precipice near me to send you ; they do not grow in the

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South: but only say the word, if you would have a compact neat box of red brick with sash windows, or a grotto made of flints and shell-work, or a walnut-tree with three mole-hills under it, stuck with honey-suckles round a basin of gold-fishes, and you shall be satisfied; they shall come by the Edinburgh coach.

In the meantime I congratulate you on your new acquaintance with the *savage*, the *rude*, and the *tremendous*. Pray, tell me, is it anything like what you had read in your book, or seen in two-shilling prints? Do not you think a man may be the wiser (I had almost said the better) for going a hundred or two of miles; and that the mind has more room in it than most people seem to think, if you will but furnish the apartments? I almost envy your last month, being in a very insipid situation myself; and desire you would not fail to send me some furniture for my Gothic

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apartment, which is very cold at present. It will be the easier task, as you have nothing to do but transcribe your little red books, if they are not rubbed out; for I conclude you have not trusted everything to memory, which is ten times worse than a lead pencil: half a word fixed upon or near the spot, is worth a cartload of recollection. When we trust to the picture that objects draw of themselves on our mind, we deceive ourselves; without accurate and particular observation, it is but ill-drawn at first, the outlines are soon blurred, the colours every day grow fainter; and at last, when we would produce it to anybody, we are forced to supply its defects with a few strokes of our own imagination. God forgive me, I suppose I have done so myself before now, and misled many a good body that put their trust in me. Pray, tell me (but with permission, and without any breach of hos-

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pitality), is it so much warmer on the other side of the Swale (as some people of honour say) than it is here? Has the singing of birds, the bleating of sheep, the lowing of herds, deafened you at Rainton! Did the vast old oaks and thick groves of Northumberland keep off the sun too much from you? I am too civil to extend my enquiries beyond Berwick. Everything, doubtless, must improve upon you as you advanced northward. You must tell me, though, about Melross, Rosslin Chapel, and Arbroath. In short, your Port-feuille must be so full, that I only desire a loose chapter or two, and will wait for the rest till it comes out.

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XXIX

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

Stoke, November 9, 1758.

DEAR MASON:

I should have told you that *Caradoc* came safe to hand, but my critical faculties have been so taken up in dividing nothing with “The Dragon of Wantley’s Dam,” that they are not yet composed enough for a better and more tranquil employment; shortly, however, I will make them obey me. But am I to send this copy to Mr. Hurd, or return it to you? Methinks I do not love this travelling to and again of manuscripts by the post. While I am writing, your second packet is just arrived. I can only tell you in gross that there seem to me certain passages altered, which might as well have been let alone; and that I shall not be

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easily reconciled to Mador's own song. I must not have my fancy raised to that agreeable pitch of heathenism and wild magical enthusiasm, and then have you let me drop into moral philosophy and cold good sense. I remember you insulted me when I saw you last, and affected to call that which delighted my imagination nonsense. Now I insist that sense is nothing in poetry but according to the dress she wears, and the scene she appears in. If you should lead me into a superb Gothic building with a thousand clustered pillars, each of them half a mile high, the walls all covered with fretwork, and the windows full of red and blue saints, that had neither head nor tail, and I should find the Venus of Medici in person perked up in a long niche over the high altar, as naked as ever she was born, do you think it would raise or damp my devotions. I say that Mador must be entirely a Briton,

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and that his pre-eminence among his companions must be shewn by superior wildness, more barbaric fancy, and a more striking and deeper harmony, both of words and numbers. If British antiquity be too narrow, this is the place for invention ; and if it be pure invention, so much the clearer must the expression be, and so much the stronger and richer the imagery — there's for you now.

I am sorry to hear you complain of your eyes. Have a care of candle-light, and rather play at hot-cockles with the children than either read or write. Adieu !
I am truly and ever yours, T. G.

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XXX

To THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

July 23, 1759.

DEAR MASON:

I was alarmed to hear the condition you were in when you left Cambridge, and, though Mr. Brown had a letter to tell him you were mending apace while I was there, yet it would give me great pleasure to hear more particularly from yourself how you are. I am just settled in my new habitation in Southampton Row; and, though a solitary and dispirited creature, not unquiet, nor wholly unpleasant to myself. The Museum will be my chief amusement. I this day passed through the jaws of a great leviathan, that lay in my way, into the belly of Dr. Templeman, superintendent of the reading-room, who congratulated himself on the sight of so

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much good company. We were, — a man that writes for Lord Royston ; a man that writes for Dr. Burton of York ; a third that writes for the Emperor of Germany, or Dr. Pocock, for he speaks the worst English I ever heard ; Dr. Stukeley, who writes for himself, the very worst person ✓ he could write for ; and I, who only read to know if there were anything worth ✓ writing, and that not without some difficulty. I find that they printed one thousand copies of the *Harleian Catalogue*, and have sold fourscore ; and that they have £900 a year income, and spend £1300, and that they are building apartments for the under-keepers, so I expect in winter to see the collection advertised, and set to auction.

Have you read the Clarendon book ? Do you remember Mr. Cambridge's account of it before it came out ; how well he recollects all the faults, and how

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utterly he forgot all the beauties ? Surely the grossest taste is better than such a sort of delicacy.

The invasion goes on as quietly as if we believed every Frenchman that set his foot on English ground would die on the spot, like a toad in Ireland ; nobody but I and Fobus are in a fright about it : by the way, he goes to church, not for the invasion, but ever since his sister Castlecomer died, who was the last of the brood.

Moralise upon the death of my Lady Essex, and do write to me soon, for I am ever yours.

At Mr. Jauncey's, Southampton Row, Bloomsbury. I have not a frank in the world, nor have I time to send to Mr. Fraser.

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XXXI

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

December 1, 1759.

DEAR MASON:

I am extremely obliged to you for the kind attention you bestow on me and my affairs. I have not been a sufferer by this calamity; it was on the other side of the street, and did not reach so far as the houses opposite to mine; but there was an attorney, who had writings belonging to me in his hands, that had his house burnt down among the first, yet he has had the good fortune to save all his papers. The fire is said to have begun in the chamber of that poor glass-organist who lodged at a coffee-house in Swithin's Alley, and perished in the flames. Two other persons were destroyed (in the charitable office of assisting their friends), by the fall

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of some buildings. Last night there was another fire in Lincoln's Inn Fields, that burnt the Sardinian Ambassador's chapel and stables, with some adjacent houses. 'Tis strange that we all of us (here in town) lay ourselves down every night on our funereal pile, ready made, and compose ourselves to rest, while every drunken footman and drowsy old woman has a candle ready to light it before the morning.

You will have heard of Hawke's victory before this can reach you ; perhaps by an express. [MS. torn] two of Hawke's fleet (of seventy and sixty guns) out of eagerness ran aground, and are lost, but most of the men preserved and brought off. There is an end of the invasion, unless you are afraid of Thurot, who is hovering off Scotland. It is an odd contemplation that somebody should have lived long enough to grow a great and glorious monarch. As to the nation, I

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fear it will not know how to behave itself, being just in the circumstances of a chambermaid that has got the £20,000 prize in the lottery.

You mistake me. I was always a friend to employment, and no foe to money; but they are no friends to each other. Promise me to be always busy, and I will allow you to be rich.—I am, dear Mason, in all situations truly yours.

At Mr. Jauncey's, in Southampton Row. I received your letter November 29, the day on which it is dated; a wonderful instance of expedition in the post.

XXXII

To THOMAS WHARTON:

London, April 22, 1760.

DEAR DOCTOR:

I am not sorry to hear, you are exceeding busy, except as it has deprived me of the pleasure I should have in hearing often

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from you, and as it has been occasioned by a little vexation and disappointment.

To find oneself business (I am persuaded) is the great art of life; and I am never so angry, as when I hear my acquaintance wishing they had been bred to some poking profession, or employed in some office of drudgery, as if it were pleasanter to be at the command of other people, than at one's own; and as if they could not go, unless they were wound up. Yet I know and feel, what they mean by this complaint: it proves, that some spirit, something of genius (more than common) is required to teach a man how to employ himself. I say *a Man*, for women, commonly speaking never feel this distemper: they have always something to do: time hangs not on their hands (unless they be fine ladies) a variety of small inventions and occupations fill up the void, and their eyes are never open in vain.

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I thank you heartily for the sow. If you have no occasion for her, I have ; and if his L^{d_p}. will be so kind as to drive her up to town, will gladly give him forty shillings and the chitterlings into the bargain. I could repay you with the story of my Lady F^r, but (I doubt) you know my sow already, especially as you dwell near Raby. However I'll venture: it may happen, you have not heard it. About two months ago Mr. Creswick (the D. of Cleveland's managing man) received an anonymous letter as from a lady, offering him (if he would bring about a match between her and his lord) £3000 to be paid after marriage out of the estate. If he came into the proposal, a place was named, where he might speak with the party. He carried the letter directly to the old Lady Darlington, and they agreed, he should go to the place. He did so, and found there a man, agent for the Lady : but refusing to

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treat with any but principals, after a little difficulty was conducted to her in person, and found it was my Lady F. (Sr. Ev. F.'s fine young widow). What passed between them, I know not : but that very night she was at Lady Darlⁿ's Assembly (as she had used to be) and no notice taken. The next morning she received a card to say, Lady D. had not expected to see her, after *what had passed*: otherwise she would have ordered her porter not to let her in. The whole affair was immediately told to everybody. Yet she had continued going about all public places *tête levée*, and solemnly denying the whole to her acquaintance. Since that I hear she owns it, and says, her children were unprovided for, and desires to know, which of her friends would not have done the same? but as neither of these expedients succeed very well, she has hired a small house, and is going into the country for the summer.

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Here has just been a duel between the Duke of Bolton and Mr. Stuart (a candidate for the county of Hampshire at the late election) what the quarrel was, I do not know: but they met near Marybone, and the D. in making a pass over-reached himself, fell down, and hurt his knee. The other bid him get up, but he could not. Then he bid him ask his life, but he would not. So he let him alone, and that's all. Mr. Stuart was slightly wounded.

The old Pundles, that sat on L^d. G. Sackville (for they were all such, but two, Gen. Cholmondeley and L^d. Albermarle) have at last hammered out their sentence. He is declared disobedient, and unfit for all military command. It is said, that nine (out of the fifteen) were for death, but as two-thirds must be unanimous, some of them came over to the merciful side. I do not affirm the truth of this. What he will do with himself, nobody guesses.

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The poor old duke went into the country some time ago, and (they say) can hardly bear the sight of anybody. The unembarrassed countenance, the looks of sovereign contempt and superiority, that his L^{d_p}. bestowed on his accusers during the trial, were the admiration of all : but his usual talents and art did not appear, in short his cause would not support him. Be that as it will, everybody blames *somebody*, who has been out of all temper, and intractable during the whole time. Smith (the Aid-de-camp, and principal witness for L^d. G.) had no sooner finished his evidence, but he was forbid to mount guard, and ordered to sell out. The court and the criminal went halves in the expence of the short-hand writer, so L^d. G. has already published the trial, before the authentic copy appears ; and in it are all the foolish questions, that were asked, and the absurdities of his judges. You may think

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perhaps that he intends to go abroad, and hide his head. Au contraire, all the world visits him on his condemnation. He says himself, his situation is better, than ever it was. The Scotch have all along affected to take him under their protection ; his wife has been daily walking with Lady Augusta (during the trial) in Leicester gardens, and Lord B.'s chariot stands at his door by the hour.

L^d. Ferrers has entertained the town for three days. I was not there, but Mason and Stonehewer were in the D. of Ancaster's gallery and in the greatest danger (which I believe they do not yet know themselves) for the cell underneath them (to which the prisoner retires) was on fire during the trial, and the D. of Anc^r. with the workmen by sawing away some timbers and other assistance contrived to put it out without any alarm given to the Court : several now recollect

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they smelt burning and heard a noise of sawing, but none guessed at the cause. Miss Johnson, daughter to the murthered man, appeared so cool, and gave so gentle an evidence, that at first sight every one concluded, she was bought off: but this could do him little good. The surgeon and his own servants laid open such a scene of barbarity and long-meditated malice, as left no room for his plea of lunacy, nor any thought of pity in the hearers. The oddest thing was this plea of temporary lunacy, and his producing two brothers of his to prove it, one a Clergyman (suspended for Methodism by the B^p. of London) the other a sort of Squire, that goes in the country by the name of *Ragged and Dangerous*. He managed the cause himself with more cleverness than any of his Counsel, and (when found guilty) asked pardon for his plea, and laid it upon the persuasions of

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his family. Mrs. Shirley (his mother), Lady Huntingdon, and others of the relations were at Court yesterday with a petition for mercy; but on the 5th of May he is to be hanged at Tyburn.

The town are reading the K. of Prussia's poetry, (*Le Philosophe sans souci*) and I have done, like the town. They do not seem so sick of it, as I am. It is all the scum of Voltaire and Bolingbroke, ✓ the *crambe recocta* of our worst Freethinkers, tossed up in German-French rhyme. *Tristram Shandy* is still a greater object of admiration, the man as well as the book. One is invited to dinner, where he dines, a fortnight beforehand. His portrait is done by Reynolds, and now engraving. *Tristram Shandy*, Dodsley gives £700 for a second edition, and two new volumes not yet written; and to-morrow will come out two volumes of Sermons by him. Your friend, Mr. Hall has printed two

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Lyric Epistles, one to my Cousin Shandy on his coming to town, the other to the grown gentlewomen, the Misses of York : they seem to me to be absolute madness. These are the best lines in them : —

“ I'll tell you a story of Elijah —
Close by a mob of children stood,
Commenting on his sober mood, etc.
And back'd them (their opinions) like such sort of
folks
With a few stones and a few jokes :
Till, weary of their pelting and their prattle,
He ordered out his Bears to battle.
It was delightful fun
To see them run
And eat up the young Cattle.”

The 7th volume of Buffon is come over : do you choose to have it ?

Poor Lady Cobham is at last delivered from a painful life. She has given Miss Speed above £30,000.

Mr. Brown is well : I heard from him

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yesterday, and think of visiting him soon. Mason and Stonewer are both in town, and (if they were here) would send their best compliments to you and Mrs. Whⁿ. with mine. You see, I have left no room for weather : yet I have observed the birth of the Spring, which (though backward) is very beautiful at present. Mind, from this day the thermometer goes to its old place below in the yard, and so pray let its sister do. Mr. Stillingfleet (with whom I am grown acquainted) has convinced me, it ought to do so. Adieu !

XXXIII

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON :

London, June 7, 1760.

DEAR MASON :

First and foremost pray take notice of the paper on which I am writing to you ; it is the first that ever was made of silk

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> rags upon the encouragement given by your Society of Arts ; and (if this were all the fruits) I think you need not regret your two guineas a-year. The colour and texture you see ; and besides I am told it will not burn (at least will not flame) like ordinary paper, so that it may be of great use for hanging rooms ; it is uncommonly tough, and, though very thin, you observe, is not transparent. Here is another sort of it, intended for the uses of drawing.

You have lately had a visit where you are that I am sure bodes no good, especially just at the time that the Dean of Canterbury and Mr. Blacowe died ; we attribute it to a miff about the garter, and some other humps and grumps that he has received. Alas ! I fear it will never do. The Condé de Fuentes was much at a loss, and had like to have made a quarrel of it, that he had nobody but the D[uke] of N[ewcastle] to introduce him ; but

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Miss Chudleigh has appeased him with a ball.

I have sent *Musæus* to Mr. Fraser, scratched here and there; and with it I desired him to enclose a bloody satire, written against no less persons than you and me by name. I concluded at first it was Mr. Pottinger, because he is your friend and my humble servant; but then I thought he knew the world too well to call us the favourite minions of taste and of fashion, especially as to Odes, for to them his abuse is confined. So it is not Secretary Pottinger, but Mr. Colman, nephew to my Lady Bath, author of *The Connoisseur*, a member of some of the inns of court, and a particular acquaintance of Mr. Garrick's. What have you done to him, for I never heard his name before? He makes very tolerable fun with me, where I understand him, which is not everywhere, but seems more angry with

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you. Lest people should not understand the humour of the thing (which indeed to do they must have our lyricisms at their fingers' ends), he writes letters in *Lloyd's Evening Post* to tell them who and what it was that he meant, and says that it is like to produce a great *combustion* in the literary world; so if you have any mind to *combustle* about it well and good ; for me, I am neither so literary nor so *combustible*.

I am going into Oxfordshire for a fortnight to a place near Henley, and then to Cambridge, if that owl Fobus does not hinder me, who talks of going to fizzle there at the commencement.

What do you say to Lord Lyttelton, your old patron, and Mrs. Montagu, with their second-hand *Dialogues of the Dead?* And then there is your friend the little black man ; he has written one supplemental dialogue, but I did not read it.

Do tell me of your health, your doings,

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your designs, and your golden dreams, and
try to love me a little better in Yorkshire
than you did in Middlesex, — For I am
ever yours, T. G.

XXXIV

To HORACE WALPOLE:

I am so charmed with the two specimens of Erse poetry, that I cannot help giving you the trouble to enquire a little farther about them, and should wish to see a few lines of the original, that I may form some slight idea of the language, the measures, and the rhythm.

Is there anything known of the author or authors, and of what antiquity are they supposed to be? Is there any more to be had of equal beauty, or at all approaching to it? I have been often told that the Poem called "Hardicanute" (which I always admired, and still admire) was the

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work of somebody that lived a few years ago. This I do not at all believe, though it has evidently been retouched in places by some modern hand : but however, I am authorised by this report to ask, whether the two Poems in question are certainly antique and genuine. I make this enquiry in quality of an antiquary, and am not otherwise concerned about it : for, if I were sure that any one now living in Scotland
> had written them to divert himself, and laugh at the credulity of the world, I would undertake a journey into the Highlands only for the pleasure of seeing him.

XXXV

To THOMAS WHARTON :

[*Endorsed July, 1760.*]

DEAR DOCTOR :

I heard yesterday from your old friend Mr. Field, that Mrs. Wharton had brought

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you a son, and as I sincerely hope this may be some addition to your happiness, I heartily congratulate you both on the occasion. Another thing I rejoice in is, to know, that you not only grow reconciled to your scene, but discover beauties round you, that once were deformities. I am persuaded the whole matter is to have always something going forward. Happy they, that can create a rose-tree, or erect a honey-suckle, that can watch the brood of a hen, or see a fleet of their own ducklings launch into the water! It is with a sentiment of envy I speak it, who never shall have even a thatched roof of my own, nor gather a strawberry but in Covent Garden. I will not believe in the *vocality* of Old Park till next summer, when perhaps I may trust my own ears.

I remain (bating some few little excursions, that I have made) still in town,

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though for these three weeks I have been going into Oxfordshire with Madam Speed ; but her affairs, as she says, or her vagaries, as I say, have obliged her to alter her mind ten times within that space : no wonder, for she has got at least £30,000, with a house in town, plate, jewels, china, and old japan infinite, so that indeed it would be ridiculous for her to know her own mind. I, who know mine, do intend to go to Cambridge, but that owl Fobus is going thither to the commencement, so that I am forced to stay till his nonsense is at an end. Chapman you see is dead at last, which signifies not much, I take it, to anybody, for his family (they say) are left in good circumstances. I am neither sorry, nor glad, for Mason (I doubt) will scarce succeed to his prebend. The old creature is down at Aston, where my Lord has paid him a visit lately, as the town says, in a

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miff, about the garter, and other *Trump*s, he has met with of late. I believe, this at least is certain, that he has deserted his old attachments, and worships another idol, who receives his incense with a good deal of coldness and negligence.

I can tell you but little of St. Germain. He saw Monsieur D'Affray at the Hague, who, in a day or two (on receiving a courier from his own court) asked the States leave to apprehend him, but he was gone, and arrived safe in St. Mary Ax, where he had lodgings (I fancy) at his old friend, La Cours, the Jew-Physician. After some days a messenger took charge of him, and he was examined (I believe) before Mr. Pitt. They however dismissed him, but with orders to leave England directly, yet I know care was taken, that he should be furnished with proper passports to go safe through Holland, to Hamburg; which gives some room 'to

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believe, what many at first imagined, that he was charged with some proposal from the French Court. He is a likely person enough to make them believe at Paris, that he could somehow serve them on such an occasion.

We are in great alarms about Quebec. The force in the town was not 3000 men, sufficient to defend the place (naturally strong) against any attack of the French forces, unfurnished as they must be for a formal siege: but by no means to meet them in the field. This however is what Murray has chose to do, whether from rashness, or deceived by false intelligence, I cannot tell. The returns of our loss are undoubtedly false, for we have above 100 officers killed or taken. All depends upon the arrival of our garrison from Louisberg, which was daily expected, but even that (unless they bring provisions with them) may increase the distress, for

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at the time, when we were told of the plenty and cheapness of all things at Quebec, I am assured, a piece of fresh meat could not be had for twenty guineas.

If you have seen Stonehewer he has probably told you of my old Scotch (or rather Irish) poetry. I am gone mad about them. They are said to be translations (literal and in prose) from the *Erse* tongue, done by one Macpherson, a young clergyman in the Highlands. He means to publish a collection he has of these specimens of antiquity, if it be antiquity: but what plagues me is, I cannot come at any certainty on that head. I was so struck, so *extasié* with their infinite beauty, that I writ into Scotland to make a thousand enquiries. The letters I have in return are ill wrote, ill reasoned, unsatisfactory, calculated (one would imagine) to deceive one, and yet not cunning enough to do it cleverly. In short, the

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whole external evidence would make one believe these fragments (for so he calls them, though nothing can be more entire) counterfeit : but the internal is so strong on the other side, that I am resolved to believe them genuine, spite of the Devil and the Kirk. It is impossible to convince me, that they were invented by the same man, that writes me these letters. On the other hand it is almost as hard to suppose, if they are original, that he should be able to translate them so admirably. What can one do ? since Stonehewer went, I have received another of a very different and inferior kind (being merely descriptive) much more modern than the former (he says) yet very old too ; this too in its way is extremely fine. In short this man is the very Dæmon of poetry, or he has lighted on a treasure hid for ages. The Welch Poets are also coming to light : I have seen a Discourse

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in MS. about them (by one Mr. Evans, a clergyman) with specimens of their writings. This is in Latin, and though it don't approach the other, there are fine scraps among it.

You will think I am grown mighty poetical of a sudden ; you would think so still more, if you knew, there was a Satire printed against me and Mason jointly, it is called *Two Odes* : the one is inscribed to Obscurity (that is me) the other to Oblivion. It tells me, what I never heard before, for (speaking of himself) the Author says, though he has,

“ Nor the Pride, nor self-Opinion,
That possess the happy Pair,
Each of Taste the fav’rite Minion,
Prancing thro’ the desert air :
Yet shall he mount, with classic housings grac’d,
By help mechanick of equestrian block ;
And all unheedful of the Critic’s mock
Spur his light courser o’er the bounds of Taste.”

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The writer is a Mr. Colman, who published the *Connoisseur*, nephew to the late Lady Bath, and a friend of Garrick's. I believe his Odes sell no more than mine did, for I saw a heap of them lie in a bookseller's window, who recommended them to me as a very pretty thing.

If I did not mention *Tristram* to you, it was because I thought I had done so before. There is much good fun in it, and humour sometimes hit and sometimes missed. I agree with your opinion of it, and shall see the two future volumes with pleasure. Have you read his sermons (with his own comic figure at the head of them)? they are in the style, I think, most proper for the pulpit, and shew a very strong imagination and a sensible heart: but you see him often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of his audience. Now for my season.

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- April 10. I observed the elm putting out.
12. That, and the pear looked green.
Therm. at 62.
13. Very fine; white poplar and willow
put out.
15. Standard pear (sheltered) in full bloom.
18. Lime and horn-beam green.
19. Swallows flying.
20. Therm. at 60. Wind S.W. Skylark, chaffinch, thrush, wren, and robin singing. Horse-chesnut, wild-briar, bramble, and sallow had spread their leaves. Haw-thorn and lilac had formed their blossoms. Black-thorn, double-flowered peach, and pears in full bloom; double jonquils, hyacinths, anemones, single wall-flowers, and auriculas, in flower. In the fields, — dog violets, daisies, dandelion, butter-cups, red-archangel, and shepherd's purse.
21. Almond out of bloom, and spreading its leaves.
26. Lilacs flowering.
- May 1. Gentianella in flower.

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- May 2. Pear goes off; apple blows. Therm.
at 63. Wind N.E. still fair and dry.
3. Evening and all night hard rain.
4. Th. at 40. Wind N.E. rain.
11. Very fine. Wind N.E. Horse-ches-
nut in full bloom. Walnut and
vine spread. Lilacs, Persian jasmine,
tulips, wall-flowers, pheasant-eye,
lily-in-the-valley in flower. In the
fields, — furze, cowslips, harebells,
and cow-parsnip.
13. Jasmine and acacia spread. Fine
weather.
18. Showery. Wind high.
19. Same. Therm. at 56.
20. Thunder, rain . 54.
21. Rain, Wind N.E. 52.
31. Green Peas 15d. a quart.
- June 1. Therm. at 78.
2. Scarlet strawberries, duke-cherries ; hay-
making here.
3. Wind S.S.E. Therm. at 84 (the highest
I ever saw it), it was at noon.
Since which, till last week we had hot
dry weather. Now it rains like mad.
Cherries and strawberries in bushels.

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I believe there is no fear of war with Spain.

JULY 1760.

XXXVI

To DR. CLARKE:

Pembroke Hall, August 12, 1760.

Not knowing whether you are yet returned from your sea-water, I write at random to you. For me, I am come to my resting place, and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning to night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) ~~doing something~~, that is, racketting about from morning to night, are occupations, I find, that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where one might

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sit still, and be alone with pleasure ; for the place was a hill like Clifden, opening to a very extensive and diversified landscape, with the Thames, which is navigable, running at its foot.

I would wish to continue here (in a very different scene, it must be confessed) till Michaelmas ; but I fear I must come to town much sooner. Cambridge is a delight of a place, now there is nobody in it. I do believe you would like it, if you knew what it was without inhabitants. It is they, I assure you, that get it an ill name and spoil all. Our friend Dr. Chapman (one of its nuisances) is not expected here again in a hurry. He is gone to his grave with five fine mackerel (large and full of roe) in his belly. He eat them all at one dinner ; but his fate was a turbot on Trinity Sunday, of which he left little for the company besides bones. He had not been hearty all the week ; but after

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this sixth fish he never held up his head more, and a violent looseness carried him off.—They say he made a very good end.

Have you seen the Erse Fragments since they were printed? I am more puzzled than ever about their antiquity, though I still incline (against everybody's opinion) to believe them old. Those you have already seen are the best; though there are some others that are excellent too.

XXXVII

To THOMAS WHARTON:

London, January 31, 1761.

MY DEAR DOCTOR:

You seem to forget me: if it were for any other reason, than that you are very busy, that is, very happy, I should not so easily pass it over. I send you a Swedish

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and English Calendar. The first column is by Berger, a disciple of Linnaeus ; the second, by Mr. Stillingfleet, the third (very imperfect indeed) by me. You are to observe, as you tend your plantations and take your walks, how the spring advances in the North ; and whether Old Park most resembles Upsal, or Stratton. This latter has on one side a barren black heath, on the other a light sandy loam ; all the country about it is a dead flat. You see, it is necessary you should know the situation (I do not mean any reflection upon anybody's place) and this is Mr. Stillingfleet's description of his friend Mr. Marsham's seat, to which in Summer he retires, and botanises. I have lately made an acquaintance with this philosopher, who lives in a garret here in the Winter, that he may support some near relations, who depend upon him. He is always employed, and always cheerful, and seems to

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me a very worthy honest man. His present scheme is to send some persons properly qualified to reside a year or two in Attica to make themselves acquainted with the climate, productions, and natural history of the country, that we may understand Aristotle and Theophrastus, etc., who have been heathen Greek to us for so many ages. This he has got proposed to Lord Bute, who is no unlikely person to put it in execution, being himself a botanist, and having now in the press a new system of botany of his own writing in several volumes, the profits of which he gives to Dr. Hill (the inspector) who has got the place of master gardener at Kensington, reckoned worth near £2000 a year. There is an odd thing for you.

One hears nothing of the King, but what gives one the best opinion of him imaginable. I hope, it may hold. The Royal Family run loose about the world,

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and people do not know how to treat them, nor they how to be treated. They visit and are visited: some come to the street-door to receive them, and that, they say, is too much; others to the head of the stairs, and that they think too little. Nobody sits down with them, not even in their own house, unless at a card table, so the world are like to grow very weary of the honour. None but the Duke of York enjoy themselves (you know, he always did) but the world seems weary of this honour too, for a different reason. I have just heard no bad story of him. When he was at Southampton in the Summer, there was a Clergyman in the neighbourhood with two very handsome daughters. He had soon wind of them, and dropped in for some reason or other, came again and again, and grew familiar enough to eat a bone of their mutton. At last he said to the father, Miss — leads

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a mighty confined life here always at home, why can't you let one of them go, and take an airing now and then with me in my chaise? Ah! Sir (says the Parson) do but look at them, a couple of hale fresh-coloured hearty wenches! They need no airing, they are well enough; but there is their mother, poor woman, has been in a declining way many years. If your Royal Highness would give her an airing now and then, it would be doing us a great kindness indeed!

You see, old Wortley Montagu is dead at last at 83. It was not mere Avarice, and its companion, Abstinence, that kept him alive so long. He every day drank (I think, it was) half a pint of Tokay, which he imported himself from Hungary in greater quantity than he could use, and sold the overplus for any price he chose to set upon it. He has left better than half a million of money: to Lady Mary £1200

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a year, in case she gives up her pretensions to dowry ; and if not, it comes to his son. To the same son £1000 per annum for life only, and after him to his daughter, Lady Bute. (Now this son is about £80,000 in debt.) To all Lady Bute's children, which are eleven, £2000 a-piece. *All the remainder* to Lady Bute, and after her to her second son, who takes the name of Wortley, and (if he fail) to the next in order ; and after all these and their children to Lord Sandwich, to whom *in present* he leaves some old manuscripts. Now I must tell you a story of Lady Mary. As she was on her travels, she had occasion to go somewhere by sea, and (to save charges) got a passage on board a man of war : the ship was (I think) Commodore Barnet's. When he had landed her, she told him, she knew she was not to offer to pay for her passage, but in consideration of his many civilities intreated

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him to wear a ring for her sake, and pressed him to accept it, which he did. It was an emerald of remarkable size and beauty. Some time after, as he wore it, some friend was admiring it, and asking how he came by it. When he heard from whom it came, he laughed and desired him to shew it to a jeweller, whom he knew. The man was sent for. He unset it; it was a paste not worth forty shillings.

The ministry are much out of joint. Mr. Pitt much out of humour, his popularity tottering, chiefly occasioned by a pamphlet against the German war, written by that *squeaking* acquaintance of ours, Mr. Manduit: it has had a vast run. The Irish are very intractable, even the Lord J.'s themselves; great difficulties about who shall be sent over to tame them: my Lord H**e again named, but (I am told) has refused it. Everybody waits for a new Parliament to settle their ideas.

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I have had no gout, since you went: I will not brag, lest it return with redoubled violence. I am very foolish, and do nothing to mark, that I ever was: I am going to Cambridge to take the *fresh air* this fine winter for a month or so. We have had snow one day this winter, but it did not lie: it was several months ago. The 18th of January I took a walk to *Kentish Town*, wind N. W. bright and frosty. Thermometer, at noon, was at 42. The grass remarkably green and flourishing. I observed, on dry banks facing the south that Chickweed, Dandelion, Groundsel, Red Archangel, and Shepherd's Purse were beginning to flower. This is all I know of the country.

My best compliments to Mrs. Wharton. I hear her butter is the best in the bishoprick, and that even Deborah has learned to spin. I rejoice you are all in health, but why are you deaf: and blind too, or

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you could not vote for F. V. I have abundance more to say, but my paper won't hear of it. Adieu!

XXXVIII

To THE REV. JAMES BROWN:

London, September 24, 1761.

DEAR SIR:

I set out at half an hour past four in the morning for the Coronation, and (in the midst of perils and dangers) arrived very safe at my Lord Chamberlain's box in Westminster Hall. It was on the left hand of the throne, over that appropriated to the foreign ministers. Opposite to us was the box of the Earl Marshal and other great officers; and below it that of the princess and younger part of the royal family. Next them was the royal side-board. Then below the steps of the *haut pas* were the tables of the nobility, on each

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side quite to the door ; behind them boxes for the sideboards ; over these other galleries for the peers' tickets ; and still higher the boxes of the Auditor, the Board of Green Cloth, etc. All these thronged with people head above head, all dressed ; and the women with their jewels on. In front of the throne was a *triomphe* of foliage and flowers resembling nature, placed on the royal table, and rising as high as the canopy itself. The several bodies that were to form the procession issued from behind the throne gradually and in order, and, proceeding down the steps, were ranged on either side of hall. All the privy councillors that are commoners (I think) were there, except Mr. Pitt, mightily dressed in rich stuffs of gold and colours, with long flowing wigs, some of them comical figures enough. The Knights of the Bath, with their high plumage, were very ornamental. Of the

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Scotch peers or peeresses that you see in the list very few walked, and of the English dowagers as few, though many of them were in town, and among the spectators. The noblest and most graceful figures among the ladies were the Marchioness of Kildare (as Viscountess Leinster), Viscountess Spencer, Countesses of Harrington, Pembroke, and Strafford, and the Duchess of Richmond. Of the older sort (for there is a grace that belongs to age too), the Countess of Westmoreland, Countess of Albemarle, and Duchess of Queensberry. I should mention too the odd and extraordinary appearances. They were the Viscountess Say and Sele, Countesses of Portsmouth and another that I do not name, because she is said to be an extraordinary good woman, Countess of Harcourt, and Duchess of St. Alban's. Of the men doubtless the noblest and most striking figure was the Earl of Errol,

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and after him the Dukes of Ancaster, Richmond, Marlborough, Kingston, Earl of Northampton, Pomfret, Viscount Weymouth, etc. The men were — the Earl Talbot (most in sight of anybody), Earls of Delaware and Macclesfield, Lords Montford and Melcombe ; all these I beheld at great leisure. Then the princess and royal family entered their box. The Queen and then the King took their places in their chairs of state, glittering with jewels, for the hire of which, beside all his own, he paid £9000 ; and the dean and chapter (who had been waiting without doors a full hour and half) brought up the regalia, which the Duke of Ancaster received and placed on the table. Here ensued great confusion in the delivering them out to the lords who were appointed to bear them ; the heralds were stupid ; the great officers knew nothing of what they were doing. The Bishop of Rochester would

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have dropped the crown if it had not been pinned to the cushion, and the king was often obliged to call out, and set matters right; but the sword of state had been entirely forgot, so Lord Huntingdon was forced to carry the lord mayor's great two-handed sword instead of it. This made it later than ordinary before they got under their canopies and set forward. I should have told you that the old Bishop of Lincoln, with his stick, went doddling by the side of the Queen, and the Bishop of Chester had the pleasure of bearing the gold paten. When they were gone, we went down to dinner, for there were three rooms below, where the Duke of Devonshire was so good as to feed us with great cold sirloins of beef, legs of mutton, fillets of veal, and other substantial viands and liquors, which we devoured all higgledy-piggledy, like porters; after which every one scrambled up again,

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and seated themselves. The tables were now spread, the cold viands eat, and on the king's table and sideboard a great show of gold plate, and a dessert representing Parnassus, with abundance of figures of Muses, Arts, etc., designed by Lord Talbot. This was so high that those at the end of the hall could see neither king nor queen at supper. When they returned it was so dark that the people without doors scarce saw anything of the procession, and as the hall had then no other light than two long ranges of candles at each of the peers' tables, we saw almost as little as they, only one perceived the lords and ladies sidling in and taking their places to dine; but the instant the queen's canopy entered, fire was given to all the lustres at once by trains of prepared flax, that reached from one to the other. To me it seemed an interval of not half a minute before the whole was in a blaze of splen-

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dour. It is true that for that half minute it rained fire upon the heads of all the spectators (the flax falling in large flakes); and the ladies, Queen and all, were in no small terror, but no mischief ensued. It was out as soon as it fell, and the most magnificent spectacle I ever beheld remained. The King (bowing to the lords as he passed) with his crown on his head, and the sceptre and orb in his hands, took his place with great majesty and grace. So did the Queen, with her crown, sceptre, and rod. Then supper was served in gold plate. The Earl Talbot, Duke of Bedford, and Earl of Effingham, in their robes, all three on horseback, prancing and curveting like the hobby-horses in the Rehearsal, ushered in the courses to the foot of the haut-pas. Between the courses the Champion performed his part with applause. The Earl of Denbigh carved for the King, the Earl of Holdernesse for

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the Queen. They both eat like farmers. At the board's end, on the right, supped the Dukes of York and Cumberland; on the left Lady Augusta; all of them very rich in jewels. The maple cups, the wafers, the faulcons, etc., were brought up and presented in form; three persons were knighted; and before ten the King and Queen retired. Then I got a scrap of supper, and at one o'clock I walked home. So much for the spectacle, which in magnificence surpassed everything I have seen. Next I must tell you that the Barons of the Cinque Ports, who by ancient right should dine at a table on the haut-pas, at the right hand of the throne, found that no provision at all had been made for them, and, representing their case to Earl Talbot, he told them, "Gentlemen, if you speak to me as High Steward, I must tell you there was no room for you; if as Lord Talbot, I am ready to give you satisfaction in any

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way you think fit." They are several of them gentlemen of the best families; so ✓ this has bred ill blood. In the next place, the City of London found they had no table neither; but Beckford bullied my Lord High Steward till he was forced to give them that intended for the Knights of the Bath, and instead of it they dined at the entertainment prepared for the great officers. Thirdly, Bussy was not at the ceremony. He is just setting out for France. Spain has supplied them with money, and is picking a quarrel with us about the fishery and the logwood. Mr. Pitt says so much the better, and was for recalling Lord Bristol directly; however, a flat denial has been *returned* to their pretensions. When you have read this

feelful send it to Pa.

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XXXIX

To THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

Pembroke Hall, December 8, 1761.

DEAR MASON:

Of all loves come to Cambridge out of hand, for here is Mr. Delaval and a charming set of glasses that sing like nightingales; and we have concerts every other night, and shall stay here this month or two; and a vast deal of good company, and a whale in pickle just come from Ipswich; and the man will not die, and Mr. Wood is gone to Chatsworth; and there is nobody but you and Tom and the curled dog; and do not talk of the charge, for we will make a subscription; besides, we know you always come when you have a mind.

T. G.

LETTERS OF GRAY

XL

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Sunday, December 30, 1764.

I have received the *Castle of Otranto*, and return you my thanks for it. It engages our attention here, makes some of us cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to bed o' nights. We take it for a translation, and should believe it to be a true story, if it were not for St. Nicholas.

When your pen was in your hand you might have been a little more communicative, for though disposed enough to believe the opposition rather consumptive, I am entirely ignorant of all the symptoms. Your canonical book I have been reading with great satisfaction. He speaketh as one having authority. If Englishmen have any feeling left, methinks they must feel now; and if the Ministry have any feeling

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(whom nobody will suspect of insensibility) they must cut off the author's ears, for it is in all the forms a most wicked libel. Is the old man and the lawyer put on, or is it real? or has some real lawyer furnished a good part of the materials, and another person employed them? This I guess; for there is an uncouthness of diction in the beginning which is not supported throughout, though it now and then occurs again, as if the writer was weary of supporting the character he had assumed, when the subject had warmed him, beyond dissimulation.

Rousseau's *Letters* I am reading heavily, heavily! He justifies himself, till he convinces me that he deserved to be burnt, at least that his book did. I am not got through him, and you never will. Voltaire I detest, and have not seen his book: I shall in good time. You surprise me, when you talk of going in February. Pray, does all the minority go too? I hope you

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have a reason. *Desperare de republica* is a deadly sin in politics.

Adieu ! I will not take my leave of you ; for (you perceive) this letter means to beg another, when you can spare a little.

XLI

To JAMES BEATTIE :

Glames Castle, October 2, 1765.

I must beg you would present my most grateful acknowledgments to your society for the public mark of their esteem, which you say they are disposed to confer on me. I embrace, with so deep and just a sense of their goodness, the substance of that honour they do me, that I hope it may plead my pardon with them if I do not accept the form. I have been, Sir, for several years a member of the University of Cambridge, and formerly (when I had some thoughts of the profession) took a

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Bachelor of Laws' degree there; since that time, though long qualified by my standing, I have always neglected to finish my course, and claim my doctor's degree: judge, therefore, whether it will not look like a slight, and some sort of contempt, if I receive the same degree from a Sister University. I certainly would avoid giving any offence to a set of men, among whom I have passed so many easy, and I may say, happy hours of my life; yet shall ever retain in my memory the obligations you have laid me under, and be proud of my connection with the University of Aberdeen.

It is a pleasure to me to find that you are not offended with the liberties I took when you were at Glames; you took me too literally, if you thought I meant in the least to discourage you in your pursuit of poetry: all I intended to say was, that if either vanity (that is, a general and undistinguishing desire of applause), or interest,

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or ambition has any place in the breast of a poet, he stands a great chance in these our days of being severely disappointed ; and yet, after all these passions are suppressed, there may remain in the mind of one, “*ingenti percusus amore*” (and such I take you to be), incitements of a better sort, strong enough to make him write verse all his life, both for his own pleasure and that of all posterity.

I am sorry for the trouble you have had to gratify my curiosity and love of superstition ; yet I heartily thank you. On Monday, Sir, I set forward on my way to England ; where if I can be of any little use to you, or should ever have the good fortune to see you, it will be a particular satisfaction to me. Lord Strathmore and the family here desire me to make their compliments to you.

P.S. Remember Dryden, and be blind to all his faults.

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XLII

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

1765.

DEAR MASON:

Res est sacra miser (says the poet), but I say it is the happy man that is the sacred thing, and therefore let the profane keep their distance. He is one of Lucretius' gods, supremely blessed in the contemplation of his own felicity, and what has he to do with worshippers? This, mind, is the first reason why I did not come to York: the second is, that I do not love confinement, and probably by next summer may be permitted to touch whom, and where, and with what I think fit, without giving you any offence: the third and last, and not the least perhaps, is, that the finances were at so low an ebb that I could not exactly do what I wished, but was

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obliged to come the shortest road to town and recruit them. I do not justly know what your taste in reasons may be, since you altered your condition, but there is the ingenious, the petulant, and the dull; for you any one would have done, for in my conscience I do not believe you care a half-penny for reasons at present; so God bless ye both, and give ye all ye wish, when ye are restored to the use of your wishes.

I am returned from Scotland charmed with my expedition; it is of the Highlands I speak; the Lowlands are worth seeing once, but the mountaïns are ecstatic, and ought to be visited in pilgrimage once a year. None but those monstrous creatures of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror. A fig for your poets, painters, gardeners, and clergymen, that have not been among them; their imagination can be made up of nothing but bowling-greens, flowering shrubs,

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horse-ponds, Fleet ditches, shell grottoes, and Chinese rails. Then I had so beautiful an autumn, Italy could hardly produce a nobler scene, and this so sweetly contrasted with that perfection of nastiness, and total want of accommodation, that Scotland only can supply. Oh, you would have blessed yourself. I shall certainly go again; what a pity it is I cannot draw, nor describe, nor ride on horseback.

Stonhewer is the busiest creature upon earth except Mr. Fraser; they stand pretty tight, for all his Royal Highness. Have you read (oh no, I had forgot) Dr. Lowth's pamphlet against your uncle the Bishop? Oh, how he works him. I hear he will soon be on the same bench. To-day Mr. Hurd came to see me, but we had not a word of that matter; he is grown pure and plump, just of the proper breadth for a celebrated town-preacher. There was

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Dr. Balguy too; he says Mrs. Mason is very handsome, so you are his friend for ever. Lord Newnham, I hear, has ill health of late; it is a nervous case, so have a care. How do your eyes do?

Adieu: my respects to the bride. I would kiss her, but you stand by and pretend it is not the fashion, though I know they do so at Hull. — I am ever yours,

T. G.

XLIII

TO THE REVEREND NORTON NICHOLLS:

Pembroke Hall, Aug. 26, 1766.

DEAR SIR:

It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered, otherwise I had then wrote to you, only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered

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a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one never can have any
more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling ! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but yesterday, and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart.

Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it yourself. Pray tell me how your own health is. I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself for a guide to Mr. Palgrave, into the Sierra-Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably ; the country is all a garden, gay, rich, and fruitful, and (from the rainy reason) had

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preserved, till I left it, all that emerald verdure, which commonly one only sees for the first fortnight of the spring. In the west part of it, from every eminence the eye catches some long winding reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their navigation ; in the east, the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This last sentence is so fine, I ^V am quite ashamed ; but, no matter, you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his ^V pudding sleeve.

I went to Margate for a day ; one would think it was Bartholomew fair that had *flown* down from Smithfield to Kent in the London machine, like my lady Stuff-damask (to be sure you have read the “New Bath Guide,” the most fashionable of books) ; so then I did *not* go to Kins-

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gate, because it belonged to my Lord Holland; but to Ramsgate I did, and so to Sandwich, and Deal, and Dover, and Folkestone, and Hythe, all along the coast, very delightful. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by anything but men and clergy, and such two-legged cattle.

Now I am here again very disconsolate and all alone, even Mr. Brown is gone; and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me; I do not mean children. You, I hope, are better off, riding and walking with Mr. Aislaby, singing duets with my cousin Fanny, improving with Mr. Weddell, conversing with Mr. Harry Duncomb. I must not wish for you here; besides, I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement.

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Do you remember how we are to go into
Wales next year? Well! Adieu. I am
sincerely yours,

T. G.

P.S. Pray, how does poor Temple find
himself in his new situation? Is Lord
Lisburne as good as his letters were? ✓
What is come of the father and brother?
Have you seen Mason?

XLIV

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

Pembroke Hall, January 27, 1767.

DEAR MASON:

Dean Swift says, one never should write
to one's friends but in high health and
spirits. By the way it is the last thing
people in those circumstances usually think ✓
of doing. But it is sure, if I were to wait
for them, I never should write at all. At
present, I have had for these six weeks a

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something growing in my throat, which nothing does any service to, and which will, I suppose, in due time stop up the passage. I go however about, and the pain is very little. You will say, perhaps, the malady is as little, and the stoppage is in the imagination; no matter for that. If it is not sufficient to prove want of health (for indeed this is all I ail), it is so much the stronger proof of the want of spirits. So, take it as you please, I carry my point, and shew you that it is very obliging in me to write at all. Indeed, perhaps on your account, I should not have done it, but, after three such weeks of Lapland weather, I cannot but enquire after Mrs. Mason's health. If she has withstood such a winter and her cough never the worse, she may defy the doctors and all their works. Pray, tell me how she is, for I interest myself for her, not merely on your account, but on her own.

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These last three mornings have been very vernal and mild. Has she tasted the air of the new year, at least in Hyde Park?

Mr. Brown will wait on her next week, and touch her. He has been confined to lie on a couch, and under the surgeon's hands ever since the first of January with a broken shin, ill doctored. He has just now got abroad, and obliged to come to town about Monday, on particular business.

Stonhewer was so kind as to tell me the mystery now accomplished, before I received your letter. I rejoice in all his accessions. I wish you would persuade him to take unto him a wife, but do not let her be a fine lady. Adieu. Present my respects and good wishes to Argentile.

— I am truly yours,

T. G.

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XLV

To THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

March 28, 1767.

MY DEAR MASON:

I break in upon you at a moment when we least of all are permitted to disturb our friends, only to say that you are daily and hourly present to my thoughts. If the worst be not yet passed, you will neglect and pardon me; but if the last struggle be over, if the poor object of your long anxieties be no longer sensible to your kindness, or to her own sufferings, allow me (at least in idea, for what could I do were I present more than this), to sit by you in silence, and pity from my heart, not her who is at rest, but you who lose her. May He who made us, the Master of our pleasures and of our pains, preserve and support you. Adieu!

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I have long understood how little you had to hope.

XLVI

To HORACE WALPOLE:

Pembroke College, February 25, 1768.

To your friendly accusation I am glad I can plead not guilty with a safe conscience. Dodsley told me in the Spring that the plates from Mr. Bentley's designs were worn out, and he wanted to have them copied and reduced to a smaller scale for a new edition. I dissuaded him from so silly an expense, and desired he would put in no ornaments at all. The *Long Story* was to be totally omitted, as its only use (that of explaining the prints) was gone: but to supply the place of it in bulk, lest *my works* should be mistaken for the works of a flea, or a pismire, I promised to send him an equal weight of

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poetry or prose : so, since my return hither, I put up about two ounces of stuff, viz. the “ Fatal Sisters,” the “ Descent of Odin” (of both which you have copies), a bit of something from the Welch, and certain little Notes, partly from justice (to acknowledge the debt where I had borrowed anything) partly from ill temper, just to tell the gentle reader that Edward I. was not Oliver Cromwell, nor Queen Elizabeth the Witch of Endor. This is literally all ; and with all this, I shall be but a shrimp of an author. I gave leave also to print the same thing at Glasgow ; but I doubt my packet has miscarried, for I hear nothing of its arrival as yet. To what you say to me so civilly, that I ought to write more, I reply in your own words (like the Pamphleteer, who is going to confute you out of your own mouth) What has one to do when *turned of fifty*, but really to think of finishing ? How-

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ever, I will be candid (for you seem to be so with me), and avow to you, that till fourscore-and-ten, whenever the humour takes me, I will write, because I like it; and because I like myself better when I do so. If I do not write much, it is because I cannot. As you have not this last plea, I see no reason why you should not continue as long as it is agreeable to yourself, and to all such as have any curiosity or judgment in the subject you choose to treat. By the way let me tell you (while it is fresh) that Lord Sandwich, who was lately dining at Cambridge, speaking (as I am told) handsomely of your book, said, it was pity you did not know that his cousin Manchester had a genealogy of the Kings, which came down no lower than to Richard III., and at the end of it were two portraits of Richard and his Son, in which that King appeared to be a handsome man. I tell you it as I heard it;

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perhaps you may think it worth inquiring into.

I have looked into Speed and Leslie. It appears very odd that Speed in the speech he makes for P. Warbeck, addressed to James IV. of Scotland, should three times cite the *manuscript proclamation* of Perkin, then in the hands of Sir Robert Cotton; and yet when he gives us the proclamation afterwards (on occasion of the insurrection in Cornwall) he does not cite any such manuscript. In Casley's *Catalogue of the Cotton Library* you may see whether this manuscript proclamation still exists or not: if it does, it may be found at the Museum. Leslie will give you no satisfaction at all: though no subject of England, he could not write freely on this matter, as the title of Mary (his mistress) to the crown of England was derived from that of Henry VII. Accordingly he everywhere treats Perkin as an impostor; yet

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drops several little expressions inconsistent with that supposition. He has preserved no proclamation: he only puts a short speech into Perkin's mouth, the substance of which is taken by Speed, and translated in the end of his, which is a good deal longer: the whole matter is treated by Leslie very concisely and superficially. I can easily transcribe it, if you please; but I do not see that it could answer any purpose.

Mr. Boswell's book I was going to recommend to you, when I received your letter: it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time! The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity. Of Mr. Boswell's truth I have not the least sus-

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picion, because I am sure he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, a Dialogue between a Green-Goose and a Hero.

I had been told of a manuscript in Benet Library: the inscription of it is “Itinerarium Fratris Simeonis et Hugonis Illuminatoris, 1322.” Would not one think this should promise something? They were two Franciscan friars that came from Ireland, and passed through Wales to London, to Canterbury, to Dover, and so to France in their way to Jerusalem. All that relates to our own country has been transcribed for me, and (sorry am I to say) signifies not a half-penny: only this little bit might be inserted in your next edition of the *Painters*: Ad aliud caput civitatis (Londoniæ) est monasterium nigrorum monachorum nomine Westmonasterium, in quo constanter et communiter omnes reges Angliæ sepe-

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liuntur — et eidem monasterio quasi immediate conjungitur illud famosissimum palatium regis, in quo est illa vulgata camera, in cuius parietibus sunt omnes historiæ bellicæ totius Bibliæ ineffabiliter depictæ, atque in Gallico completissimè et perfectissimè conscriptæ, in non modicâ intuentium admiratione et maximâ regali magnificentia.

I have had certain observations on your *Royal and Noble Authors* given me to send you perhaps about three years ago: last week I found them in a drawer, and (my conscience being troubled) now enclose them to you. I have even forgot whose they are.

I have been also told of a passage in *Pb. de Comines*, which (if you know) ought not to have been passed over. The Book is not at hand at present, and I must conclude my letter. Adieu! — I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

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XLVII

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

August 1, [1768.]

DEAR MASON:

Where you are, I know not, but before
> this can reach you I guess you will be in
residence. It is only to tell you that I
profess Modern History and languages in
> a little shop of mine at Cambridge, if you
will recommend me any customers. On
Sunday Brocket died of a fall from his
horse, drunk, I believe, as some say, return-
ing from Hinchinbroke. On Wednesday
the Duke of Grafton wrote me a very
handsome letter to say that the King
offered the vacant place to me, with many
more speeches too honourable for me to
transcribe. On Friday, at the levee, I
kissed his Majesty's hand. What he said
I will not tell you, because everybody that

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has been at court tells what the King said to them. It was very gracious, however. Remember you are to say that the Cabinet Council all approved of the nomination in a particular manner. It is hinted to me that I should say this publicly, and I have been at their several doors to thank them. Now I have told you all the exterior; the rest, the most essential, you can easily guess, and how it came about. Now are you glad or sorry, pray? Adieu.—Yours ever,

T. G., P. M. H. and L.

XLVIII

TO THE REVEREND NORTON NICHOLLS:

Pembroke College, Nov. 8, 1768.

Not a single word since we parted at Norwich, and for aught I know, you may be ignorant how I fell into the jaws of the King of Denmark at Newmarket, and might have staid there till this time, had I

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not met with Mr. Vice-Chancellor and Mr. Orator, with their diplomas and speeches; who, on their return to Cambridge, sent me a chaise from thence, and delivered me out of that den of thieves. However, I passed a night there; and in the next room, divided from me by a thin partition, was a drunken parson and his party of pleasure, singing and swearing, and breaking all the ten commandments. All I saw on my way else was the abbey church at Wyndham, to learned eyes a beautiful remnant of antiquity, part of it in the style of Henry the First, and part in that of Henry the Sixth; the wooden fretwork of the north aisle you may copy, when you build the best room of your new Gothic parsonage; it will cost but a trifle. So now I am going to town about my business, which (if I despatch to my mind) will leave me at rest, and with a tolerably easy temper for one while. I return

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hither as soon as I can, and give you notice what a sweet humour I am in. Mrs. Nicholls and you take advantage of it, come and take possession of the lodge at Trinity Hall (by the way, I am commissioned to offer it to you by Dr. Marriott for that purpose, and you have nothing to do but to thank him for his civilities, and say at what time you intend to make use of them); and so we live in clover, and partake the benefits of a University education together, as of old. Palgrave is returned from Scotland, and will perhaps be here. Mason too, if he is not married (for such a report there is), may come, and Dr. Hallifax is always at your service. Lord Richard Cavendish is come: he is a sensible boy, awkward and bashful beyond all imagination, and eats a buttock of beef at a meal. I have made him my visit, and we did tolerably well considering. Watson is his public tutor,

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and one Winstanley his private; do you know him?

Marriott has begun a subscription for a musical amphitheatre, has appropriated £500 (Mr. Titley's legacy to the university) to that purpose, and gives twenty guineas himself. He has drawn a design for the building, and has printed an argument about the poor's-rates, which he intended to have delivered from the bench, but one of the parties dropped the cause. He has spoke at the Quarter Sessions two hours together, and moved the townspeople to tears, and the University to laughter. At laying down his office too he spoke Latin, and said, *Invidiam, et opinionum de me commenta delebit dies.* He enlarged (which is never done) on the qualifications of Hinchliffe his successor, *qui mores hominum multorum vidi et urbes — qui cum Magnis vixit et placuit.* Next day Hinchliffe made his speech, and said

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not one word (though it is usual) of his predecessor. I tell you Cambridge news for want of better. They say Rigby is to move for the expulsion of Wilkes from the house. My respects to mamma.

I am yours, T. G.

Tell me about my uncle and aunt: direct to Roberts, Jermyn Street.

XLIX

TO THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS:

Pembroke College, January 2, 1769.

DEAR SIR :

Here am I once again, and have sold my estate, and got a thousand guineas, and four score pounds a year for my old aunt, and a £20 prize in the lottery, and lord knows what arrears in the treasury, and am a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that

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hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him; and in a few days I shall have curtains, are you advised of that; ay, and a mattress to lie upon.

And there's Dr. Halifax tells me, there are three or four fellow-commoners got into the lodge, but they will be out in a week's time, and all ready for Mrs. Nicholls's reception and yours, so do your pleasures, I invite nobody. And there's Dr. Thomas may be Bishop of Carlisle if he pleases, and (if not) Dr. Powell; and in the first case Dr. Ross will be Dean of Ely. And so I am yours, T. G.

L

TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON:

Old Park, Saturday, August 26, 1769.
DEAR MASON:

I received last night your letter, big with another a week older than itself. You

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might as well have wrote to me from the deserts of Arabia, and desired me to step over and drink a dish of tea with you. This morning I sent to Auckland for a chaise; the man's answer is that he had a chaise with four horses returned yesterday from Hartlepool, that the road was next to impassable, and so dangerous that he does not think of sending out any other that way, unless the season should change to a long drought. I would have gone by Durham, but am assured that road is rather worse. What can I do? You speak so jauntily, and enter so little into any detail of your own journey, that I conclude you came on horseback from Stockton (which road, however, is little better for carriages). If so, we hope you will ride over to Old Park with Mr. Alderson; there is room for you both, and hearty welcome. The doctor even talks of coming (for he can ride) to invite you

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on Monday. I wonder how you are accommodated where you are, and what you are doing with Gen. Carey. I would give my ears to get thither, but all depends on the sun. Adieu.

It is twenty miles to Old Park, and the way is by Hart, over Sheraton Moor, and through Trimdon. There is no village else that has a name. Pray write a line by the bearer.

T. GRAY.

LI

To CHARLES VON BONSTETTEN:

Cambridge, April 12, 1770.

Never did I feel, my dear Bonstetten, to what a tedious length the few short moments of our life may be extended by impatience and expectation, till you had left me; nor ever knew before with so strong a conviction how much this frail body sympathizes with the inquietude of

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the mind. I am grown old in the compass of less than three weeks, like the Sultan in the Turkish tales, that did but plunge his head into a vessel of water and take it out again, as the standers by affirmed, at the command of a Dervise, and found he had passed many years in captivity, and begot a large family of children. The strength and spirits that now enable me to write to you, are only owing to your last letter a temporary gleam of sunshine. Heaven knows when it may shine again ! I did not conceive till now, I own, what it was to lose you, nor felt the solitude and insipidity of my own condition before I possessed the happiness of your friendship. I must cite another Greek writer to you, because it is much to my purpose : he is describing the character of a genius truly inclined to philosophy. "It includes," he says, "qualifications rarely united in one single

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mind, quickness of apprehension and a retentive memory, vivacity and application, gentleness and magnanimity ;” to these he adds an invincible love of truth, and consequently of probity and justice. “Such a soul,” continues he, “will be little inclined to sensual pleasures, and consequently temperate; a stranger to illiberality and avarice; being accustomed to the most extensive views of things, and sublimest contemplations, it will contract an habitual greatness, will look down with a kind of disregard on human life and on death; consequently, will possess the truest fortitude. Such,” says he, “is the mind born to govern the rest of mankind.” But these very endowments, so necessary to a soul formed for philosophy, are often its ruin, especially when joined to the external advantages of wealth, nobility, strength, and beauty; that is, if it light on a bad soil, and want its proper nurture,

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which nothing but an excellent education can bestow. In this case he is depraved by the public example, the assemblies of the people, the courts of justice, the theatres, that inspire it with false opinions, terrify it with false infamy, or elevate it with false applause ; and remember, that extraordinary vices and extraordinary virtues are equally the produce of a vigorous mind : little souls are alike incapable of the one and the other.

If you have ever met with the portrait sketched out by Plato, you will know it again : for my part, to my sorrow I have had that happiness. I see the principal features, and I foresee the dangers with a trembling anxiety. But enough of this, I return to your letter. It proves at least, that in the midst of your new gaieties I still hold some place in your memory, and, what pleases me above all, it has an air of undissembled sincerity. Go on, my

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best and amiable friend, to shew me your heart simply and without the shadow of disguise, and leave me to weep over it, as I now do, no matter whether from joy or sorrow.

LII

To CHARLES VON BONSTETTEN :

April 19, 1770.

Alas ! how do I every moment feel the truth of what I have somewhere read, “Ce n'est pas le voir, que de s'en souvenir ;” and yet that remembrance is the only satisfaction I have left. • My life now is but a conversation with your shadow — the known sound of your voice still rings in my ears — there, on the corner of the fender, you are standing, or tinkling on the piano-forte, or stretched at length on the sofa. Do you reflect, my dearest friend, that it is a week or eight days before I can receive a letter from you, and as much

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more before you can have my answer ; that all that time I am employed, with more than Herculean toil, in pushing the tedious hours along, and wishing to annihilate them ; the more I strive, the heavier they move, and the longer they grow. I cannot bear this place, where I have spent many tedious years within less than a month since you left me. I am going for a few days to see poor N[icholls], invited by a letter, wherein he mentions you in such terms as add to my regard for him, and express my own sentiments better than I can do myself. "I am concerned," says he, "that I cannot pass my life with him ; I never met with any one who pleased and suited me so well : the miracle to me is, how he comes to be so little spoiled : and the miracle of miracles will be, if he continues so in the midst of every danger and seduction, and without any advantages but from his own excellent nature and understand-

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ing. I own I am very anxious for him on this account, and perhaps your inquietude may have proceeded from the same cause. I hope I am to hear when he has passed that cursed sea, or will he forget me thus *in insulam relegatum?* If he should it is out of my power to retaliate."

Surely you have written to him, my dear Bonstetten, or surely you will ! he has moved me with these gentle and sensible expressions of his kindness for you : are you untouched by them ?

You do me the credit, and false or true it goes to my heart, of ascribing to me your love for many virtues of the highest rank. Would to heaven it were so ! but they are indeed the fruits of your own noble and generous understanding, which has hitherto struggled against the stream of custom, passion, and ill company, even when you were but a child ; and will you now give way to that stream when your

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strength is increased ? Shall the jargon of French Sophists, the allurements of painted women *comme il faut*, or the vulgar caresses of prostitute beauty, the property of all who can afford to purchase it, induce you to give up a mind and body by nature distinguished from all others, to folly, idleness, disease, and vain remorse ? Have a care, my ever amiable friend, of loving what you do not approve. Know me for your most faithful and most humble despot.

LIII

To THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS.

September 14, 1770.

DEAR SIR :

Venga, venga, V. S. si serva ! I shall be proud to see you both. The lodgings over the way will be empty ; but such a staircase ! how will Mrs. Nicholls be able

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to crowd through it? with what grace, when she gets out of her chair, can she conduct her hoop petticoat through this augur-hole, and up the dark windings of the grand escalier that leads to her chamber? it is past my finding out. So I delay, till I hear from you again, before I engage them. I believe there may be a bed for you, but is there room for Mrs. Kipiffe, mamma's maid? I am sure I know not.

I was very ill when I received your letter, with a feverish disorder, but have cured it merely by dint of sage-tea, the beverage of life. It is a polydynamious plant, take my word; though your Linnaeus would persuade us it is merely dian-drious. I applaud your industry; it will do you a power of good one way or other, only do not mistake a Carabus for an Orchis, nor a Lepisma for an Adenanthera. Here is Mr. Foljambe, has got a flying hobgoblin from the East Indies, and a

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power of rarities, and then he has given me such a phalæna, with looking glasses in its wings, and a queen of the white ants, whose belly alone is as big as many hundred of her subjects, I do not mean their bellies only, but their whole persons ; and yet her head and her tetons and her legs are no bigger than other people's. Oh, she is a jewel of a pismire !

I hear the triumphs and see the illuminations of Alloa hither. But did Mrs. E. lie a night at Edinburgh in her way thither ? Does she meet with no signs of mortality about her castle ? Are her subjects all civet-cats and musk-deer ?

My respects to your mother. Adieu ! I have had an infinite letter from Bonstetten, he goes in October to Rocheguion on the Loire, with the Duchess d'Envile. The people in several provinces are starving to death on the highways. The King (in spite to his parliaments and nation), it

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is thought, will make the Duke d'Aiguillon his chief minister. T. G.

LIV

To THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS:

Pembroke College, January 26, 1771.

DEAR SIR:

I want to know a hundred things about you. Are you fixed in your house, for I hear many vague reports of Miss Allin's inclination to part with the estate, and that the Loves are desirous of the purchase, and would bid high? what part of the mansion (where I used to tremble at a breath of air) was blown down in the high wind? did not you bless your stars for that dreary flat that lay between you and Corton, and barred all sight of the sea in its fury, and of the numberless wrecks that strewed all your coast? as to our little and unpicturesque events, you know them, I

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find, and have congratulated Mr. President, who is now our master, in due form ; but you do not know that it never rains but it pours : he goes to town on Monday for institution to the living of Streath-ham, in the Isle of Ely, worth from two to three hundred pound a year, and given him by the king's majesty. The detail is infinite, the attacks, the defences, the evasions, the circumventions, the sacrifices, the perjuries, are only to be told by word of mouth ; suffice it to say that it is carried swimmingly and triumphantly against two lords temporal and one spiritual, who solicited for their several protégés in vain ; so our good uncle Toby will have about four hundred pounds a year, no uncomfortable pittance ! I have had several capricious letters from Berne. He has sent me some pretty views of his native country and its inhabitants. The portrait too is arrived, done at Paris, but no more

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like, than I to Hercules : you would think it was intended for his father, so grave and so composed : doubtless he meant to look like an Englishman or an owl. Pray send me the letter, and do not suppose I grudge postage.

I rejoice you have met with Froissart : he is the Herodotus of a barbarous age : had he but had the luck of writing in as good a language, he might have been immortal ! his locomotive disposition (for then there was no other way of learning things), his simple curiosity, his religious credulity, were much like those of the old Grecian. Our ancestors used to read the *Mort d'Arthur*, *Amadis de Gaul*, and Froissart, all alike, that is, they no more suspected the good faith of the former than they did of the latter, but took it all for history. When you have *tant chevauché* as to get to the end of him, there is Monstrelet waits to take you up, and will set you

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down at Philip de Comines; but previous to all these, you should have read Villehardouin and Joinville. I do not think myself bound to defend the character of even the best of kings. Pray slash them, and spare not. My best compliments to Mrs. Nicholls. I am very sincerely yours,

T. G.

Your friend Mr. Crofts has just left me. He is a candidate for the University, and will succeed in the room of De Grey, now Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

LV

To THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS:

Jermyn Street, June 28, 1771.

DEAR SIR :

The enclosed came a few days after you left us, as I apprehend, from Temple. I continue here much against my will. The gout is gone, the feverish disorder abated,

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but not cured ; my spirits much oppressed, and the more so as I foresee a new complaint, that may tie me down perhaps to my bed, and expose me to the operations of a surgeon. God knows what will be the end of it.

It will be an alleviation to my miseries if I can hear you are well, and capable of enjoying those objects of curiosity, that the countries you are in promise to afford you : the greater the detail you give me of them the happier I shall be. Mr. Clarke called on me yesterday, and desires to be remembered. I know nothing new here, but that Mr. T. Pitt is going to be married to a Miss Wilkinson, the daughter of a rich merchant, who gives her thirty thousand pounds down, and at least as much more in expectation. Adieu ! I am faithfully yours,

T. G.

Wilkes is like to lose his election.

NOTES.

I. Letter I., page 1. *Richard West* (1717-1742) was then at Christ Church, Oxford. See Introduction. The letter is of uncertain date, but was written in reply to a letter of West's from Oxford, Nov. 14, 1735.

II. 2. *What you sent me last.* "Ad Amicos," a Latin elegy, had been sent by West to Gray and Walpole.

III. 4. The uncle with whom Gray was staying was Jonathan Rogers, who had married Anna Antrobus. He lived near the Burnham Beeches, died in 1742, and was buried at Stoke-Pogis. Mr. Gosse, in his edition of Gray's works, says that the uncle was Robert Antrobus. But Robert Antrobus died seven or eight years before this letter was written,—according to Mr. Gosse's Life of Gray, in 1729; or according to Mr. Leslie Stephen, in 1730.

6. *Old Mr. Southerne* was Thomas Southerne, author of "The Fatal Marriage" and "Oroonoko," and last survivor of the Restoration dramatists.

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IV. 9. *My Lord Conway.* Francis Seymour Conway, Walpole's cousin, afterward Earl of Hertford and English Ambassador to Paris.

VI. 17. *Out rushed a great wolf,* etc.
“This odd incident,” said Mason, “might have afforded Mr. Gray a subject for an ode, which would have been a good companion to that on the death of a favourite cat.”

20. *The King of Sardinia — We shall stay.* Here Mason omitted a passage describing the city. “As Mr. Gray,” he said, “has given it to Mr. West in the following letter [VII.], and that in a more lively manner, I thought it unnecessary to insert.”

VII. 24. *Ce cbien de visage.* West was “tall and slim, of a pale and meagre look and complexion.”

VIII. 26. *So learned and political a correspondence.* This letter was written at the end of one from Walpole to West.

27. *Labore fessi venimus,* etc. Catullus, Carmina, xxxi, v. 7.

IX. 28. The exact date of this letter is

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uncertain; but West's letters show that it belongs between March 28 and April 4, 1742.

30. *The Dunciad*. The Fourth Book, published in 1742.

31. *Agrippina*. A tragedy which Gray never finished.

X. 31. *Made a Muse of a Cough*. West had sent Gray some Latin verses about an "importunissima tussis." They were "the production of four o'clock in the morning," while he lay in his bed "tossing and coughing, and all unable to sleep." West lived only two months longer.

32. Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* had appeared the February before.

XI. 38. Mr. Tovey ("Gray and his Friends," p. 180) gives the correct date of this letter. John Chute, Walpole's correspondent, and the Mr. Whitehead who is mentioned in the postscript, had met Gray in Venice. They were the same two "Italianized friends" with whom the poet once "flaunted about" in London.

40. *Mr. Mann*. Sir Horace Mann, the

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British Resident in Florence. Gray and Walpole had stayed at his house.

41. *Middleton.* Conyers Middleton published in 1741 his "Life of Cicero." In 1748 appeared his famous "Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers."

41. *The Sofa.* A satirical romance by Crebillon, 1740.

41. *Pergolesi.* Giambattista Pergolesé, of whose music Gray was very fond.

42. *Mr. Glover.* Richard Glover (1712–1785) wrote an epic, "Leonidas," and an unsuccessful tragedy, "Boadicea."

XII. 46. *Thomas Wharton* was an old friend of Gray's, and a fellow of Pembroke. After his marriage in 1747 he lived in London; in 1758 he settled down to the practice of medicine at Old Park, Durham.

47. *The Party* was, of course, Horace Walpole. *Ashton* was he of the old Quadruple Alliance.

XIII. 50. *The Duke.* The Duke of Cumberland.

51. *Old Balmerino.* Arthur Elphinstone,

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the last Lord Balmerino in Scotland, was tried, with Lords Kilmarnock and Cromartie, for having taken part in the rebellion of "the '45." Balmerino and Kilmarnock were beheaded on Tower Hill, Aug. 18, 1746. Their execution is described in one of Walpole's best letters.

52. *Lord Lovat.* Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, was beheaded on Tower Hill, April 9, 1747.

53. *Twentieth year of the war.* Thucydides, Lib. vii. [Mason.]

XIV. 59. *Dr. Long.* Roger Long, the Master of Pembroke College before the election of Dr. James Brown in 1770.

60. *Mr. Warton.* Joseph Warton, whose "Poems" appeared in December, 1746. The "Odes" of William Collins were published in the same month. The public chose Warton as the man for their money, and hardly noticed Collins.

XV. 62. *On Brown's account.* Dr. James Brown. See the Introduction, and the note to XIV.

63. *Smart.* Christopher Smart, the poet

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(1722-1770), had been elected fellow of Pembroke in 1745. During one of his fits of insanity he wrote the famous "Song to David."

64. *Chapman.* Master of Magdalen. *Rutherford.* Thomas Rutherford, then Regius Professor of Divinity. *Heberden.* Lecturer on the *Materia Medica*.

65. *He is determined to suppress a work, etc.* See note on *Middleton*, p. 41. The work, the "Free Inquiry," was not suppressed.

XV. & XVI. In these two letters were inserted copies of the "Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat."

XVI. 69. *Your new honours.* Walpole had been elected Fellow of the Royal Society. *Gormogon.* The Gormogons were members of a secret brotherhood which arose from some dissension among the Free Masons. See Pope's "Dunciad," iv, 576.

XVII. 70. "*Approchez vous, Néron?*" Speech of Agrippina in Racine's "Britanicus."

72. *Mr. Ratcliffe,* brother to the Earl of Derwentwater, had just been executed for his part in "the '45."

NOTES

XVIII. 74. *The unhappy news.* Gray's aunt, Mary Antrobus, died Nov. 5, 1749. She was buried in Stoke churchyard, in the same vault where Gray and his mother were afterward buried.

XIX. 76. *You have brought me into a little sort of distress.* Walpole had let various people see copies of the "Elegy."

XX. 78. *You have indeed conducted with great decency, etc.* Within five days of Gray's request (XIX.) Dodsley published the "Elegy" in a large quarto pamphlet.

79. *A drama, not mine.* Mason's "Elfrida." See XXIV., 87, note.

XXI. 81. *Mr. Bentley.* Richard Bentley, who illustrated the first edition of Gray's collected poems. The book was published by Dodsley in 1753, and was entitled "Designs by Mr. R. Bentley for Six Poems by Mr. T. Gray."

XXII. 83. *Surprised at the print.* "A proof print of the Cul de Lampe, which Mr. Bentley designed for the 'Elegy,' and which represents a village funeral; this occasioned the pleasant mistake of his two aunts." [Mason.]

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84. *Suffer my bead to be printed.* Without consulting Gray, Walpole had ordered an engraving to be made of the Eckhardt portrait (see frontispiece to this volume). Gray's remonstrance put an end to the project.

XXIV. 87. *The Rev. William Mason* (1724–1797) had received his M.A. from St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1749. Through Gray's influence he was elected fellow of Pembroke. In 1754 he was presented to the rectory of Aston, in Yorkshire, by Lord Holderness, to whom he became chaplain. In 1772 his tragedy "Elfrida" was brought out at Covent Garden, with only moderate success. Next year he resigned his chaplaincy, and in 1774 published the "Life and Letters" of Gray. "Caractacus" appeared at Covent Garden in 1776. A decidedly vain man, Mason mistook himself for a poet, and was constantly appealing to Gray for criticism. He and Nicholls, it should be added, seem not to have been very good friends.

87. *We performed our journey.* Gray had gone from Cambridge to Durham with Richard

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Stonehewer, secretary to the Duke of Grafton. It was through Stonehewer's influence that Gray was afterward appointed to his professorship. See Introduction.

XXV. 90. *My aunt Rogers.* See note to III., p. 4, and the Introduction.

90. *Passed that evening with him . . . has absolutely.* "A line and a half have been cut out of the MS." [Gosse.]

93. *Mentioned in the . . . under the name of the.* "These words in italics are supplied, one and a half lines of MS. being cut." [Gosse.]

XXVI. 97. *Richard Hurd* (1720-1808), a friend of Warburton; after 1783, Bishop of Worcester.

98. *A player and a doctor of divinity.* Garrick and Dr. Warburton.

99. *You are so ripe for the press.* Hurd was then writing his "Moral and Political Dialogues."

XXVII. 100. *Sack and silver, etc.* Gray had been offered the office of poet laureate.

101. *Rowe.* Nicholas Rowe (1674-

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1718), author of “Jane Shore” and “The Fair Penitent,” succeeded Tate as laureate.

102. *Settle.* Elkanah Settle (1648–1723), of “Doeg” and Green Dragon fame, was the last of the city poets.

102. *Eusden.* Poet laureate in 1716.

XXVIII. 103. *William Palgrave*, known to Gray and his other friends as “Old Pa,” was a fellow of Pembroke, and rector of Palgrave and Thrandeston. When this letter was written he was making a tour in Scotland.

XXIX. 107. *Caradoc.* Mason’s tragedy of “Caractacus.” See XXIV., 87, note.

107. *Dividing nothing with “the Dragon of Wantley’s Dam.”* The “nothing” was the little property of Gray’s aunt, Mrs. Rogers, who had died in September. The “Dragon’s Dam” was another aunt, Mrs. Oliffe, Gray’s joint executor.

XXX. 110. Gray was now living in London, where for the next three years he spent most of his time. *The Museum.* The British Museum was opened in January, 1759. The great leviathan was the skeleton of a whale.

NOTES

111. *The Clarendon book.* The “Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon,” was published in 1759.

112. *Fobus.* The “fizzling Duke” of Newcastle, chancellor of the University of Cambridge.

XXXI. 114. [MS. torn.] The missing part of the manuscript contained an account of the defeat of the French fleet by Hawke, at Quiberon Bay, Nov. 20, 21, 1759. Fragments of the account are printed by Mr. Gosse.

XXXII. 119. *L^d. G. Sackville.* Lord George Sackville, when in command of the cavalry at the battle of Minden (Aug. 1, 1759), had refused to charge at a critical moment. He was tried by court martial, and cashiered.

121. *L^d. Ferrers.* Laurence Shirley, fourth Earl Ferrers, was hanged May 5, 1760, for the murder of John Johnson, his receiver of rents.

123. *Tristram Shandy* appeared in January, 1760. *Your Friend, Mr. Hall.* John Hall Stevenson (1718–1785), author of “Crazy Tales.”

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124. *Miss Speed*, afterward Countess of Virey, lived with Lady Cobham at Stoke House, the scene of Gray's "Long Story." See the introduction to this volume.

125. *Mr. Stillingfleet* (1720-1771), the naturalist.

XXXIII. 127. *A bloody satire*. Two odes, to Obscurity and Oblivion, by G. Colman and R. Lloyd. See pp. 137-138.

XXXIV. 129. *Specimens of Erse poetry*. Macpherson's first instalment of Ossian. *Hardicanute*. A ballad by Lady Wardlaw and Mr. Pinkerton.

XXXV. 132. *My Lord*. Lord Holderness, to whom Mason was chaplain.

XXXVI. 141. *Dr. Clarke* had been a college friend of Gray's, and was now a physician at Epsom.

XXXVII. 143-144. *A Swedish and English Calendar*. This was added at the end of the letter.

XXXVIII. 151. *The Coronation* was that of George III.

XL. 161. *The Castle of Otranto*. Wal-

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pole's romance had appeared in print about a week before the date of this letter. Our attention here. Gray was in Cambridge. Your canonical book. Probably a political pamphlet by William Greaves.

162. *Rousseau's Letters.* The "Lettres de la Montagne."

XLI. 163. *James Beattie* (1735-1803), essayist, moral philosopher, and author of "The Minstrel," had met Gray at Glammis Castle in 1765. *The public mark of their esteem.* The Marischal College of Aberdeen had offered Gray the degree of Doctor of Laws.

165. *The trouble you have had to gratify my . . . love of superstition.* Beattie had sent Gray a "History of Second Sight," and a "History of Witches."

XLII. 168. *For all His Royal Highness.* This is, as Mason noted, probably a reference to the Duke of Cumberland, whose death had been a great loss to the administration.

XLIII. 169. *Norton Nicholls* (1742-1809) was an undergraduate at Trinity Hall in 1760, and at about that time he met Gray at a tea in

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Peterhouse. For a while Gray directed his studies, and the two became as close friends almost as Gray and West had been. In 1767 Nicholls obtained the living of Lound and Bradwell. In 1770 he introduced Bonstetten to Gray; and thirty-five years later he wrote his reminiscences of the poet.

171. *The New Bath Guide*, by Christopher Anstey, was a clever bit of satirical verse, just published.

XLIV. 175. *Argentile*. Mrs. Mason.

XLV. 176. *I break in upon you at a moment*, etc. Mason's wife had just died.

XLVI. 179. *Speaking handsomely of your book*. Walpole's "Historic Doubts."

181. *Mr. Boswell's book*. Probably "An Account of Corsica," etc., by James Boswell (1768).

XLVII. 184. *Brocket*. Lawrence Brockett had held the chair to which Gray now succeeded. *Hincbinbroke*. The seat of Lord Sandwich, where Brockett had been dining.

185. *T. G., P.M.H. and L.* Thomas Gray, Professor of Modern History and ~~Literature~~ languages

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XLVIII. 185. *The King of Denmark.*
Christian VII., who had been visiting Cambridge.

187. *Dr. Marriott.* Sir James Marriott, the Master of Trinity Hall.

189. *Wilkes.* John Wilkes, the editor of the “North Briton,” came back from his outlawry in 1768, and was returned to the House four times by the Middlesex Whigs. He became an alderman of London in 1769, Sheriff of London and Middlesex in 1771, and Lord Mayor in 1774.

XLIX. 189. *Have sold my estate.* Houses on the west side of Hand Alley, London. *For my old aunt.* Mrs. Oliffe.

L. 190. A postscript to this letter was added by Dr. Wharton. *Old Park.* See XII., 46, note.

LI. 192. *Charles von Bonstetten* (1745–1832), Bailly of Nyon in the Canton of Berne, was a gifted, fiery, revolutionary young Swiss, whom Nicholls introduced to Gray in 1770. In later years he became the author of

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various essays, *pensées*, and the like. He had a remarkable gift of making friends.

LIV. 203. *Mr. President.* James Brown.
Capricious letter from Berne. From Bonstetten ;
see note on LI., 192.

LV. 206. *Wilkes.* See note on XLVIII.,
189.

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